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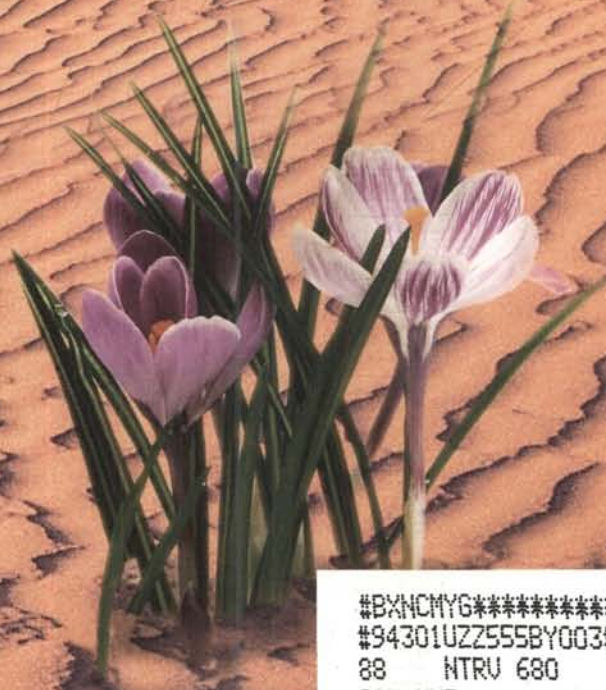
ORK ON THE COURT

WFB on Ross Douthat's *Privilege*

NATIONAL REVIEW

Arab Spring

David Pryce-Jones • Victor Davis Hanson • The Editors



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Redefining the School Leader

KURT M. LANDGRAF,
PRESIDENT & CEO, ETS

The job description of today's school leader is a far cry from what it was just a generation ago.

Changing demographics, education reform, and an expanding view of schools' role in our society have redefined the roles and responsibilities of school superintendents, principals, and administrators up and down the line.

Today, school leaders are under pressure to close performance gaps; raise test scores; manage budgets; attract, develop and retain highly qualified teachers; monitor policy and the law; even address students' physical and mental health.

These new responsibilities make sense. What goes on in school is critical, but it is not the only factor in determining how — or even whether — students learn. Research and experience prove that when it comes to academic performance, things such as nutrition, family involvement, and political support matter.

And school leaders are responding accordingly. In New Jersey's Trenton Central High School, for example, school leaders are engaging the community through such initiatives as a monthly "Family Literacy Night," which helps parents participate in their children's education, and a "Parent Linking Network," which supports parents trying to motivate their children to stay in school and succeed academically. ETS is proud to be working with Trenton High on these and other efforts to improve student performance.

If we're going to expect more of school leaders, then we need to support them more. Certainly, they need the financial resources to equip their schools with the necessities of modern education — from textbooks and technology to professional staffs that make learning possible.

School leaders also need a framework for action. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium has developed an excellent model in its *Standards for School Leaders*. The consortium stresses that school leaders should be committed to creating safe and supportive learning environments and collaborating with families and the community in support of learning.

ETS stands ready to work with schools and districts that are committed to improvement and meeting tough challenges, just as we've been working with Trenton Central High School in its reform efforts.

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MARCH 28, 2005 VOL. LVII, NO. 5

NATIONAL REVIEW

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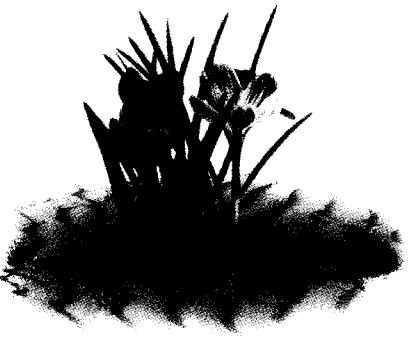
■ COVER ESSAY

Page 37

A Democratic Momentum

In a tone of wonder, the leftist German magazine *Der Spiegel* spoke for flabbergasted onlookers with the question posed by its recent cover story: 'Could George W. Bush Be Right?' Yes, he could: He is advancing freedom. Relapses are always possible, of course, but suddenly today's Arab order is shaking with unprecedented hope. *By David Pryce-Jones*



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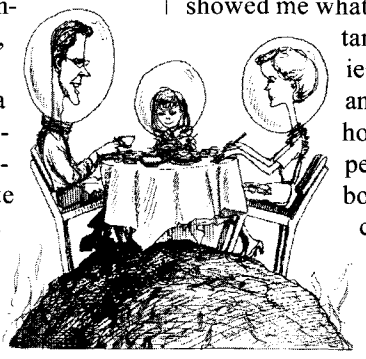
letters to the editor

UP, UP, AND AWAY

Cheers and some groans to Alexander Rose for his review of the state of NASA's programs ("Giant Leaps . . .," Feb. 28). His conclusion is right on: We are going to have to build a starship with airplane economics. But I disagree with his assessment of President Bush's Vision for Space Exploration.

There are two things you need in order to make access to space routine and leadership in space secure: cheap, reliable transportation and somewhere to put your stuff when you get up there. Space exploration is still looking for the equivalent of the Boeing 707, which revolutionized air travel. The Shuttle isn't safe enough and cannot be made safe enough. And in 1993, NASA took the over-designed Space Station Freedom and converted it into a disaster, the International Space Station. The ISS is a disaster because its transportation system is expensive and inadequate and its infrastructure is far too expensive for its results.



Bush's Vision for Space Exploration will solve these problems if executed correctly. It terminates the Shuttle program in a planned fashion and caps our commitment to the ISS, retaining plans to utilize it while allowing our partners to handle most of the transportation.

The third leg of the Vision is the development of the Crew Exploration Vehicle. That's the part NASA has to get right. Can they do it? Can they design a cheap, rugged, reusable starship? Can Mr. Rutan or Mr. Musk? I sure hope so. If not, we won't be going to Mars in 2030. Maybe we're not destined to. America was discovered in 1492, and in 1803, when Jefferson sent Lt. Lewis on his way, we still didn't know that the Rocky Mountains existed. Getting around the universe might take that kind of time.

Joseph P. Kerwin
Houston, Tex.

PEN PALS

I have a story to add to yours about middle-school students' sending nasty letters to the troops ("The Week," March 14). Last year at my university's multicultural fair, the College Republicans decided to set up a table where children could write letters to troops overseas. As my brother is in the Marine Corps, I was enthusiastic about helping with the project. The day was going well, and the response was generally positive until a girl, probably 14 or 15, came up and took a piece of paper and some markers. While I was busy playing with one of the children, the girl finished her card and put it in the mailbox we had set up. After she left, one of the other students manning the table called me over and showed me what the girl had drawn: a tank, on fire, with bodies strewn on the ground and the message, "Come home before this happens to you." We were both horrified and proceeded to fold up the card and put it to the side. Meanwhile, much younger boys drew scenes of Rambo-like soldiers in tanks, conquering the bad guys. It's interesting to see how five-year-olds can be more knowing than a teenager.

Sara Rose Cavalli
Fredericksburg, Va.

THE DELICATE SEX

I laughed out loud reading Christina Hoff Sommers's "Summers Storm" (Feb. 14), which illuminated the insensitive, intolerant, and anti-intellectual actions of the sensitive, tolerant, and intellectual Left. Especially pleasing was the image of "po Miz Hopkins" fleeing the room with an attack of the "vapors." At which point Summers should have said, "QED."

Dion F. Kendrick
Des Plaines, Ill.

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The Burden of Law

EDUCATION NEXT

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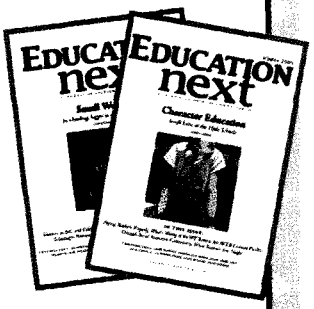

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Not long ago, I visited an inner-city Catholic high school. I was impressed with what I saw. The halls were quiet, the students respected their teachers, and the principal was the ultimate authority on issues regarding students and teachers.

I had a nagging suspicion that I had seen a school very much like this long ago. Then I remembered: I was seeing a reflection of the public high school in Houston, Texas, that I had attended a half century ago.

What had happened during the past five decades? A recent report by a nonpartisan legal reform group called Common Good gives the answer: **schools today are being strangled by a ton of laws, regulations, contracts, mandates, and rules**. The report (which can be found at http://cgood.org/burden-of-law.html) analyzes the many steps that principals in New York City must take if, for example, they want to suspend a disruptive student who is making it impossible for other students to learn or repair the heating system or remove an inept teacher.

In every situation, the principal must take care not to violate federal laws, state laws, court decisions, consent decrees, case law, union contracts, and chancellor's regulations. Common Good's Web site has links to fifty different legal authorities that limit or control what the principal can and cannot do.

All these sources are more than any one individual can possibly read or comprehend: 850 pages of state law (in small print); 720 pages of state regulations; 15,000 formal decisions by the state commissioner of education; hundreds of pages of collective bargaining agreements; thousands of pages of federal laws affecting the schools; and thousands of pages of chancellor's regulations.

The principal who determines that a student is disrupting the learning environment or is a danger to himself or others must embark on a very lengthy legal process that involves multiple letters, notifications, conferences, hearings, appeals, decisions at the local level, more conferences, more hearings, more appeals, decisions at the regional level, more hearings, more appeals, and so on. It may take several weeks to resolve the matter.

Philip Howard, the chairman of Common Good and a lawyer, has been leading a campaign against the procedural burden imposed by law on our institutions. Howard insists that we should make educating our children our top priority, not complying with a mountain of laws, mandates, and regulations. According to Howard, **"We should let the administrators and teachers use their judgment and then hold them accountable for their performance."**

Common Good has not placed a price tag on the cost of compliance, but it is bound to be huge in terms of inefficiency, wasted time, resources diverted, and the inability of the schools to focus relentlessly on education.

Is it possible to free the schools from the smothering embrace of their friends who write the rules, laws, regulations, and mandates? If we do not figure out how to restore authority to teachers and principals, then our schools will continue to become ever more expensive and ever less effective.

—Diane Ravitch

Diane Ravitch is a research professor, New York University; distinguished visiting fellow, Hoover Institution; member, Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education; and adviser to Common Good.

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THE WEEK

■ Liberal law professor Jack Balkin makes a prediction in the Ten Commandments case: "Justice O'Connor upholds five, strikes down five."

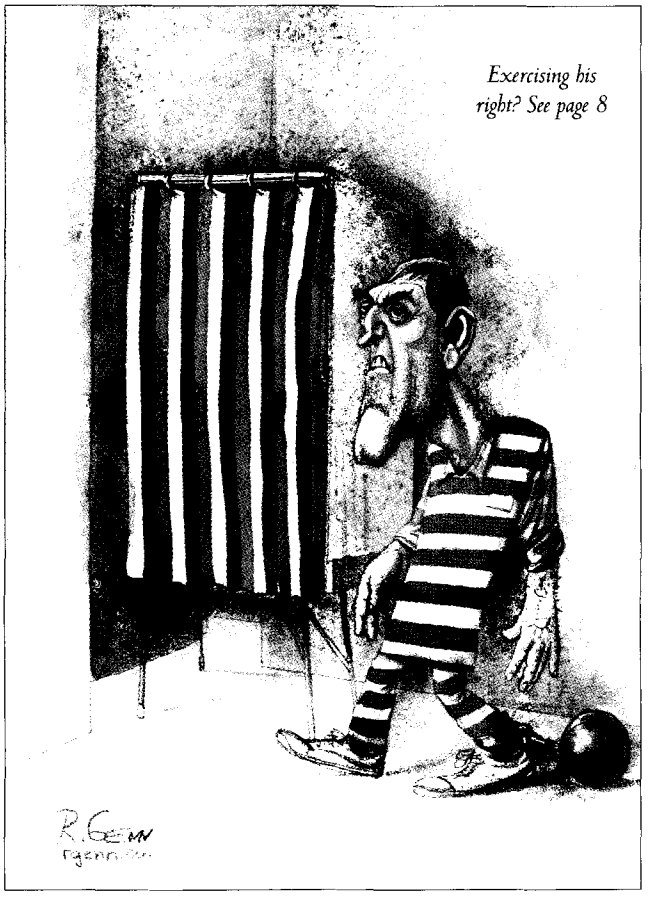
■ Martha Stewart lost 20 pounds in jail. Could white-collar crime be the solution to America's "obesity crisis"?

■ The president is having some success on Social Security. In polls, most people say that the program has a serious problem that requires action. Democrats, who at the start of the year were insisting that there was no major problem, are changing their tune. But there is still considerable disarray among Republicans on the Hill, and public support for personal accounts appears to have softened. Legislation is not going to pass just because people think Social Security is insolvent. It will pass, if it passes, because people think reform offers them a better deal than the status quo. That's the case that the president, and his party, need to be making.

■ Senate Democratic chief Harry Reid said that Alan Greenspan was "one of the biggest political hacks we have in Washington." Greenspan achieved this hackdom by supporting President Bush on Social Security reform and on tax cuts, albeit with qualifications in both instances. It is certainly true that Greenspan bends with the political winds. He helped President Clinton raise taxes in 1993. But back then, of course, he was considered a statesman rather than a hack. The attack on Greenspan can hardly advance Reid's political agenda, however much it may thrill the likes of Paul Krugman. The senator may yet find that there is something worse than being the biggest political hack in town, and that is being the least effective one.

■ Howard Dean, new DNC chair, went to Lawrence, Kan., and said, "This is a struggle of good and evil. And we're the good." Noted. Next?

■ West Virginia senator Robert Byrd, upset about Republican plans to end the filibustering of judges, called the move Hitlerian. To force up-or-down votes on judges would be to eviscerate the rule of law, just as Nazi Germany did. The resulting (and justified) uproar over the noxious Hitler comment managed to obscure the absurdity of everything else the senator said. Byrd's argument is that ending filibusters would "mute dissent and gag opposition voices" and "rob a senator of the right to speak out against an overreaching executive branch or a wrongheaded policy." We are not persuaded that Senate Republicans should formally restrict the filibuster. But the free-speech argument makes no sense. Are we to believe that when Byrd was in the majority, and tried on several occasions to restrict the filibuster, he was trying to "gag" the opposition? Whether or not the Senate decides to modify its procedures, senators are going to retain the right to vote against any nominee or bill—and to speak out, as hysterically as they wish.



Exercising his right? See page 8

ROMAN GENN

■ President Bush nominated John Bolton, now undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, to be our ambassador to the U.N. This is joyous news, an appointment in the tradition of Jeane Kirkpatrick. Within hours of the announcement the media had made "hardliner" into Bolton's first name, and Democrats are pledging to fight his confirmation. Bolton is indeed a conservative, but one who has throughout his career shown a willingness to try to save multilateral institutions from their worst excesses—he worked successfully to reverse the U.N.'s "Zionism is racism" resolution—and make them serve U.S. interests, as the Bolton-crafted Proliferation Security Initiative—it brings nations together to block trade in WMD-related items—has done. As the U.N. attempts to recover from the oil-for-food scandal and other blights, and as diplomacy

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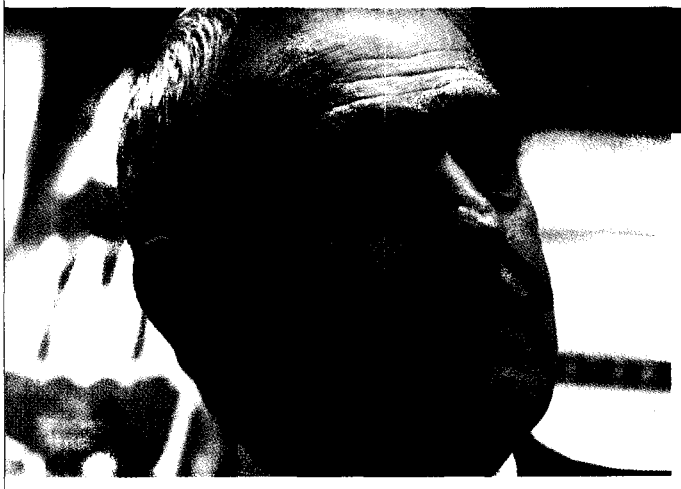
THE WEEK...

becomes a more salient aspect of the War on Terror, Bolton's voice and experience are exactly what the United States needs at the U.N. Get him to Turtle Bay forthwith.

■ *U.S. News & World Report* had a happy little item on Alberto Gonzales. He has "a refreshing approach to his new job as the nation's attorney general," the magazine said. "Rather than being the heavy known just for jailing bad guys, a role filled so well by former AG John Ashcroft, he wants to be the 'people's lawyer.'" Gee. We rather like an AG who'll jail bad guys. We don't regard that as being "the heavy"—we regard that as . . . being the good guy (and "the people's lawyer"). The anti-Ashcroftians would *really* like it if Gonzales came to the podium with a topless gal on either side. Dare to be cool, Al!

■ In 1978, Congress created a bankruptcy law that was quite generous toward debtors. Too generous: Under this law, the number of people filing bankruptcy has soared—it's up five-fold over the last two decades. Increased bankruptcy rates hurt consumers of credit. They lead to increased interest rates on credit cards, to higher down payments for auto loans, and to higher penalty fees. So now Congress is considering a bill that would make it harder for people who have the means to repay their debts to get out of them through bankruptcy. It is estimated that it would affect 7 to 10 percent of bankruptcy filers. But even that is too much for many Democrats, who say that the bill is a gift to the credit-card industry and too hard on consumers. They minimize the abuse of bankruptcy filing, portraying all the bankrupts as hard-luck cases. No doubt many



NANCY KASZERMAN/ZUMA

Dan, Done

THANKS to a lengthy "farewell" profile of Dan Rather in *The New Yorker*, we've now learned that Rather keeps an ancient Royal typewriter smack-dab in the middle of his desk because, "It reminds me of what I aspire to be—I want to be a great reporter." One wonders whether the irony of this has dawned on Rather. After all, it was another typewriter—or the lack of one—that essentially brought his career as a great reporter to an end.

Now, bear with me through what will seem like an unrelated story. At the outset of World War II, Britain was still scrounging for any weapons it could get its hands on, and so de-mothballed a piece of light field artillery from the Boer War. The five-man crew it rounded up had a curious system for firing the armament: Precisely three seconds prior to discharging the gun, two of the men would snap to attention until all was silent again. None of the experts or young officers consulted could deduce the point of the exercise. Finally, they brought in a wizened retired artillery colonel. He watched the exercise for a moment, then, jarred by an old memory, recognition flickered in his eyes: "I have it. They are holding the horses." You see, in the past those two men would have physically held the horses to prevent them from running off with the sound of the cannon. But in a war without horses, they had become mere place-holders.

What do the two stories have in common? Well, the moral of the second, according to the late Robert Nisbet, is that the pull of habit and institutional inertia were so powerful that for years no one thought to question the fact that there were no longer any horses to hold. Dan Rather's typewriter is a bit like that British artillery piece. Rather grew up in an era when manual typewriters were already kitschy. But he was determined to stay in denial about that. He was an honorary member of Murrow's boys as far as he was concerned.

Denial—or, as countless bloggers call it, "Dan-ial"—is the Rosetta stone of Rather's personality. When JFK was assassinated, Rather refused to believe that a story of cheering kids in Dallas (the "city of hate," after all) wasn't true, and he ran with it anyway. He couldn't accept that even CBS News had to abide by the schedule of the U.S. Open when he walked off the set for those famous six minutes. And of course, Rather wouldn't believe that millions of Americans didn't buy his "objective journalist" act. Throughout his career, he insisted that liberal bias was a myth concocted by partisans to prevent him and his kind from "telling it straight."

Thus his departure from the center ring is fitting, albeit more than a little pathetic. During the onslaught he insisted that he'd love to be the one to "break" the story that the memos were fake. At the time it made him seem like Norma Desmond announcing she was ready for her close-up. We've moved on, but he hasn't. He explained to David Letterman that the memos were real but just couldn't be verified to his standards. As for these strange new creatures called bloggers, they just had to be Karl Rove's hatchet men because anyone who ever questioned Dan Rather was by definition a partisan. Like the crew holding onto horses that were no longer necessary, CBS will hold onto Dan Rather for a while longer. He will be their Royal typewriter—a kitschy reminder of days long past. Until one day some whippersnapper won't be able to figure out why he's there at all.

—JONAH GOLDBERG

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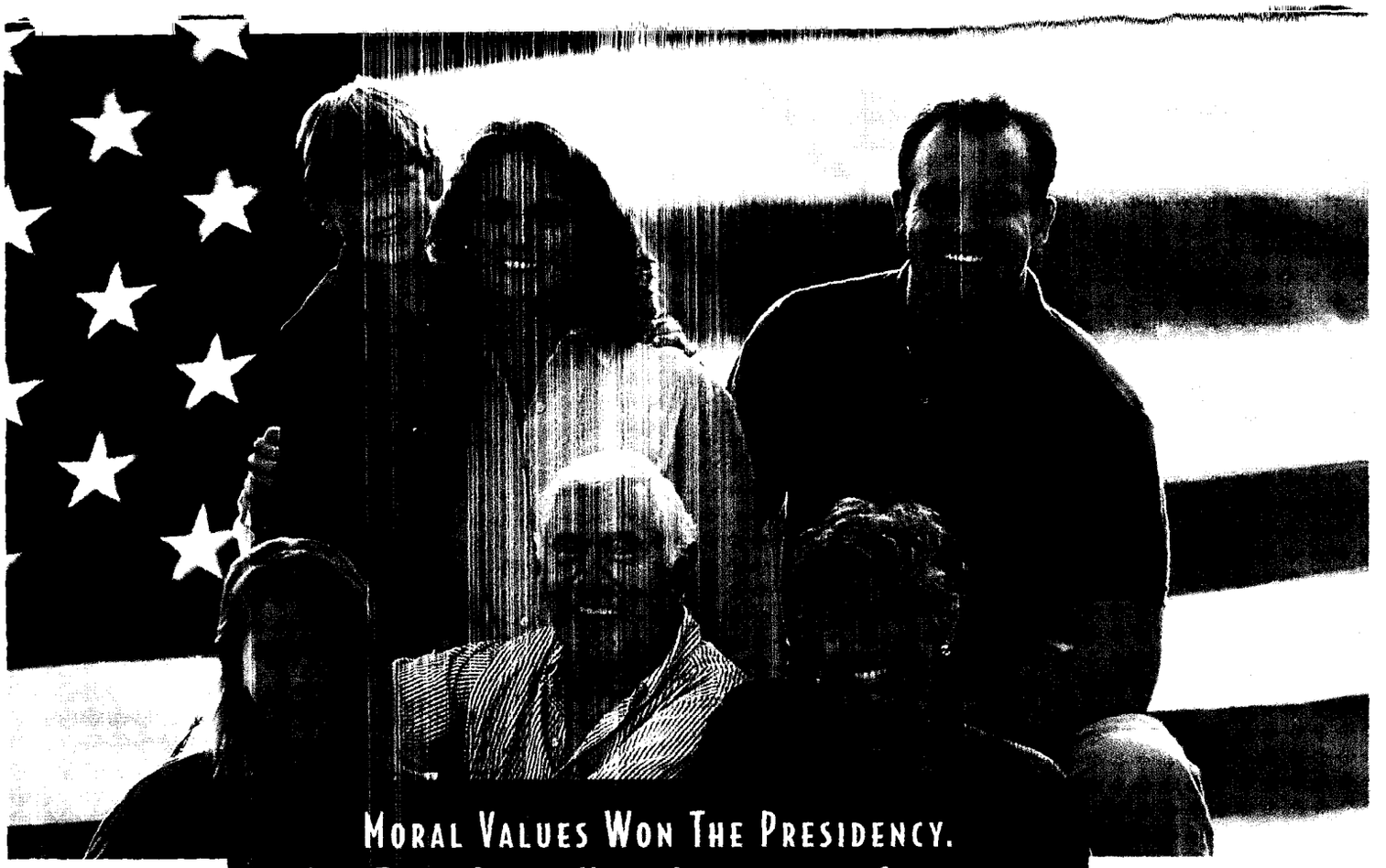

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THE WEEK...

of them are. But hard luck has not increased by a factor of five since the 1980s This is a bill that deserves to pass.

■ Almost every state imposes restrictions on voting by people who have committed felonies. Senators Clinton, Kerry, and Boxer are sponsoring a bill to force every state to allow felons to vote. Proponents say that once out of prison, criminals have repaid their debt to society and should regain their rights. They also say that the "disenfranchisement" of felons—what others would call their surrender of the right to vote by choosing to commit felonies—disproportionately affects blacks. We suspect that Senators Clinton et al. are at least as moved by the fact that it disproportionately affects Democrats. Our law does not treat felonies with perfect indifference once a sentence has been served: States regulate felons' gun ownership, for example. States may reasonably worry that the political interests of felons as a voting bloc would be unhealthy for society at large. If we are locking up too many people, then perhaps we should soften the laws. What we should not do is force the states to compensate for the Democrats' failures in winning the votes of the law-abiding.

■ The Supreme Court is considering whether two governmental displays of the Ten Commandments—one in Kentucky, another in Texas—violate the First Amendment. The question is often thought to turn on whether the government is endorsing the religious tradition of which the commandments are a part or is merely providing a history lesson or a bit of empty ceremony. Once it heads down this path, the Court quickly finds itself basing constitutional law on its authoritative pronouncements on the psychology of teenagers (as in the public-prayer cases) or on the distance between Rudolph and the manger (as in the Nativity-scene cases). It can wander out of this maze of its own construction by returning to originalism. Nobody really supposes that the public, at the time of the Founding, thought that the mere acknowledgment of a Creator and of the moral norms that flow from monotheism amounted to an "establishment of religion." Nor did anyone think that the point of the First Amendment was to make the Supreme Court a micromanager of church-state relations at every level of government. The *New York Times* editorializes, "The founders may not have anticipated a country with many Hindu and Buddhist Americans, but they were wise enough to write a document that protects their rights." That is entirely correct, as long as we understand that their rights remain perfectly intact when they see a Judeo-Christian monument.

■ Giuliana Sgrena, a journalist with the Italian Communist daily *Il Manifesto*, was kidnapped in February in Iraq. Evidently the Italian government made a secret payment to spring her, and did not tip the American army. As Sgrena's car sped toward a military checkpoint, the soldiers fired a barrage of warning shots, then shots, injuring Sgrena and killing Nicola Calipari, the intelligence officer who was accompanying her. Sgrena, taking a leaf from Eason Jordan, has charged that the Yanks tried to kill her. Preposterous: Wickedness would be far more efficient. The deadly incident is bad enough. A brave Italian has died, and an American ally and its politically courageous leader, Silvio Berlusconi, have come under heavy pressure. War is hell, and friendly fire is one of its most painful features.

■ The Bush administration is considering offering benefits to Iran in exchange for its agreement to relinquish its nuclear ambitions. This is a tactical maneuver designed both to show good will toward Britain, France, and Germany, which have been trying to negotiate a nuclear deal with Iran, and to avoid being blamed by the Europeans for allegedly sabotaging the talks. The idea is to set the stage for a united front in favor of tougher action if (when) the negotiations fail. It is unlikely that the Iranians will agree to permanently suspend uranium enrichment, the prerequisite for any meaningful deal; and even if they did, they could renege. The administration has little realistic alternative to playing along, since the Europeans will insist on taking this line of diplomacy as far as it can go anyway. Should their attempt fail despite American backing, all the blame will then fall on the Iranians, where it belongs.

■ Iran's courageous democracy advocates are certainly not safe in their own country, where they risk imprisonment, torture, and worse for criticizing Iran's corrupt mullahcracy. But they may not be safe outside Iran, either. Abdulrahim Raeesi, an Iranian political-science professor, fled with his wife and son to Pakistan after he was arrested and maltreated for writing a pro-democracy article in an underground newspaper. But Iran's secret police soon found them, and while his family went to stay with friends elsewhere, Raeesi stayed put to seek asylum through the U.N.'s refugee agency. His request was denied, and on February 7 armed men broke into the room he shared with two other Iranian asylum-seekers, killing one of them, Ahmed Mashoof, while Raeesi and the other escaped. The story suggests that the Iranian government, feeling threatened by changes in the region and the strong pro-democracy movement within its borders, may be returning to its earlier policy of sending intelligence agents and militias to assassi-

THE BIG QUESTION

Could Mr. Bush be right? Could he,
Despite not one damn WMD,
Have led this flotsam into what,
With no help from that EU lot,
Looks like the frigging Promised Land?
In Tinseltown, a sad-sack band
Of looneytooners pose this question—
A hot one for the next election.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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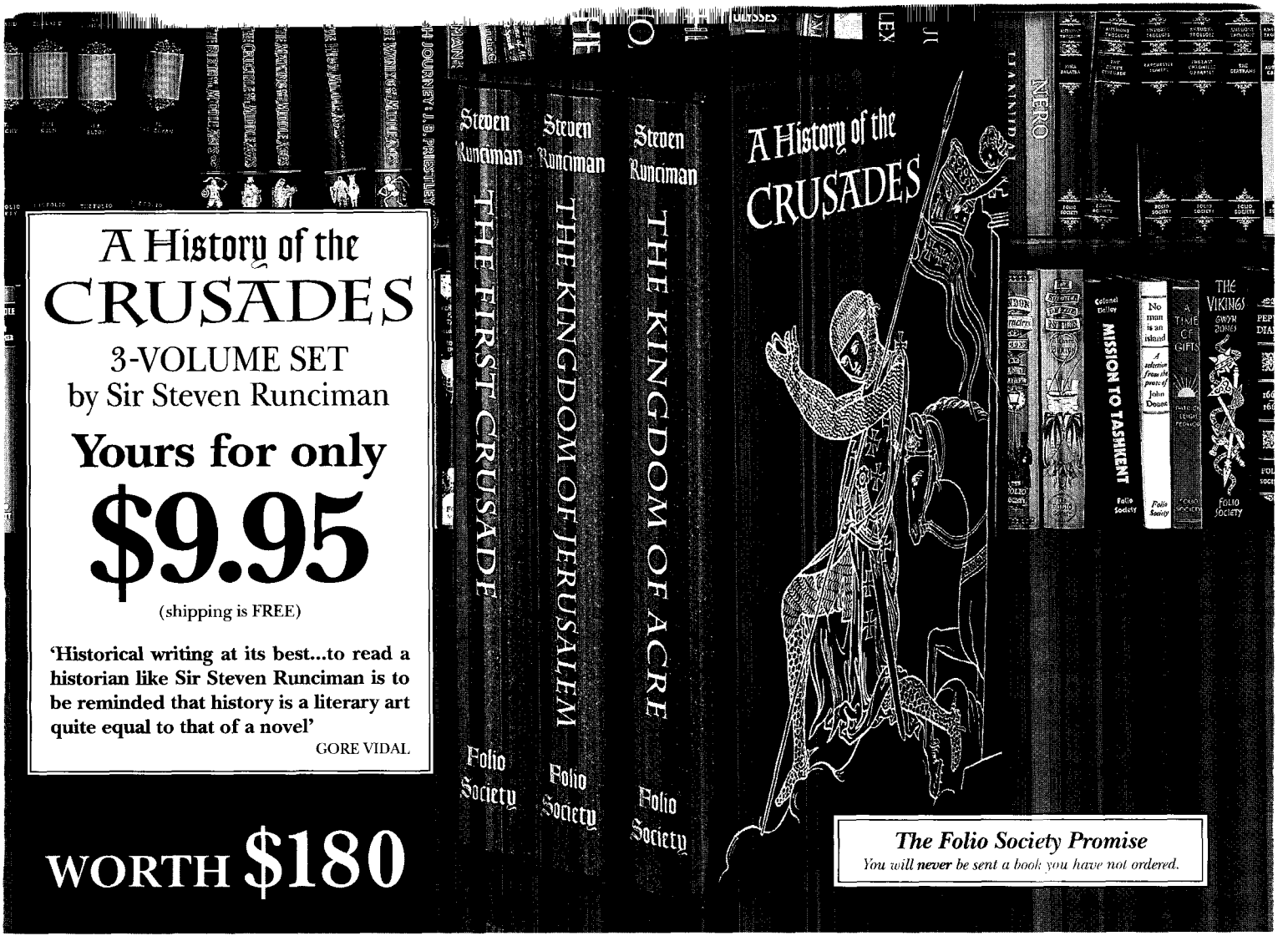
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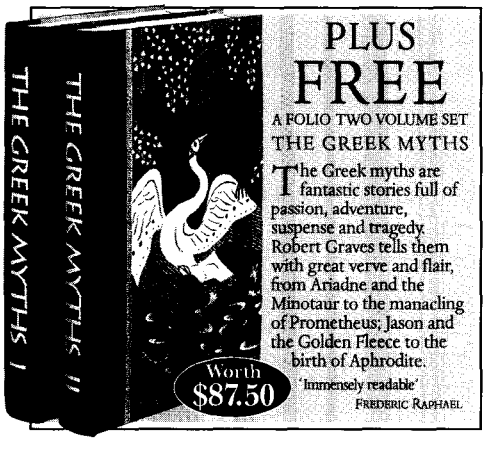
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THE WEEK...

nate outspoken Iranians abroad. It also suggests abject failure on the part of the U.N.'s refugee agency. Yet another example, it seems, of the U.N.'s unfailing propensity to aid the designs of despots.

■ One risk of liberalization is that Islamists can come to power. Look at Holland. Two Dutch members of parliament, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a Somalian-born feminist, and Geert Wilders, a conservative immigration restrictionist, are essentially in jail thanks to the threats of local jihadists. Ali sleeps in a naval base, or in ever-changing hotels protected by bodyguards; Wilders has to live in a high-security prison ("like a bad B-movie," he says). Their incarceration follows the murder last November of filmmaker Theo van Gogh, who dared to criticize the treatment of women in Islam. Holland is not yet under sharia law—Ali and Wilders have not been killed (only van Gogh has)—but, on the margin, Holland enjoys a bigoted Islamic regime: Think of the constraints upon Copts in Egypt. The last free man to leave Holland won't have to turn out the lights; the lights are going off all over the country.

■ Robert Mugabe has ruled Zimbabwe since the country's independence a quarter-century ago. During those years, Zimbabwe has gone from being the breadbasket of southern Africa to being a basket case begging for handouts from international aid agencies. This terrible decline might have something to do with Mugabe's policy of taking land from successful white farmers and giving it to his friends and relatives. As a matter of fact, Mugabe recently admitted that 56 percent of the "liberated" land is no longer being cultivated. Of course, Cap'n Bob knows whom to blame. After Condoleezza Rice called Zimbabwe an "outpost of tyranny," back in January, our Bobby said that the secretary of state, born of slave ancestry, should know that the white man is not a friend. Why anybody, white or black, would want to be friends with a thuggish nation-wrecker like Mugabe is a question he did not explore.

■ Canada's announcement that it will not cooperate with the United States in building a missile-defense system says more about the weakness of prime minister Paul Martin's minority government than it does about the merits of the Bush administration's plans. Ottawa's decision apparently was driven by polls showing that most Canadians want nothing to do with American ABMs that might protect Vancouver from North Korean warheads. This majority is a slim one, and its numbers are puffed up by overwhelming opposition in Quebec, that piece of Old Europe in the New World. Canadians in the non-French-speaking provinces actually tend to support missile defense, and their ranks include Conservative party leader Stephen Harper, who stands a good chance of succeeding Martin at some point. If he does, the Canadians will find that they are still welcome to participate in the defense of their own country.

■ It is not Pol Pot chic, exactly. But a recent review in the *New York Times*, of Philip Short's *Pol Pot: Anatomy of a Nightmare*, by William T. Vollmann, makes for a queasy read. Vollmann and Short agree that Pol Pot was a mass murderer. Yet in the context of Cambodian history, Pol Pot's brutalities do not seem singular; and after all, Vollmann notes, America is responsible for My Lai and Abu Ghraib. He concludes: "even now you can find poor people in Cambodia who . . . wish for the return of the Khmer Rouge." Where to start? Perhaps with the fall of man. Since we all feel it, evil appears everywhere, and when it does it necessarily acquires local coloring. But—deep breath—the United States has not murdered 1 million-plus people recently (or, indeed, ever). Pol Pot, ruler of a much tinier country, managed to do that in a very short time. A word almost completely missing from Vollmann's piece is "Communism" (he mentions Marx, only to say that Cambodians did not understand him). Pol Pot was empowered by modern totalitarian doctrine, like Mao, Stalin, and Hitler—and even now, you can find poor thinkers in the *New York Times* who do not understand the century they just lived through.

■ After 40 years, *The Public Interest* has ceased publication, and it will be missed. Founded in 1965 by Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and Daniel Bell, it began with enthusiasm about the vast meliorative efforts of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. Economists and social scientists had figured out how society works, and Johnson was rolling up his sleeves and putting it all into practice. It didn't turn out that way, of course. Many of the writers associated with the journal, having been "mugged by reality," became neoconservatives. For the rest of its life, it would demonstrate that social science doesn't have to be liberal—or dull. (With Charles Murray writing about poverty, James Q. Wilson about crime, and Milton Friedman about health care, there was never much risk of that.) The journal was a useful teacher to the end.

■ The Eric Breindel Award for Excellence in Opinion Journalism is given once a year, by the News Corporation. It goes to a journalist who exhibits "love of country and its democratic institutions" and "bears witness to the evils of totalitarianism." The award is worth $10,000. Information may be obtained from Germaine Febles, at (212) 843-8031, or gfebles@rubenstein.com. The deadline is April 22.

■ What would the Oscars be these days without some culture-war fight? *Million Dollar Baby* racked up four big ones (Best Picture, Director, Actress, and Supporting Actor). Propaganda for assisted suicide? True. A reliable formula well-executed? Also true—and until red-staters pay attention to the importance of talent, blue-staters will clean our clocks. But movies themselves are changing in ways that could be to our benefit. Theatrical release is more and more a teaser for DVDs; hence, the segmentation that gives us dozens of TV channels will grow apace in Hollywood. The medium will split into mass vehicles, and films for niches. There will be good and bad movies of both sorts: *The Lord of the Rings* and slasher/fart dreck on one hand; *Kinsey*, *Fahrenheit 9/11*, and *The Passion*

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THE WEEK...

of the Christ on the other. The common culture, to the extent it existed, is gone. Time for the aesthetically ambitious to find their marks. Lights, camera, action.

■ Movie actress Jada Pinkett Smith, wife of Will Smith, gave a speech to the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations. Here is what she told them: "Women, you can have it all—a loving man, devoted husband, loving children, a fabulous career. They say you gotta choose. Nah, nah, nah, we are a new generation of women. We got to set a new standard of rules around here. You can do whatever it is you want. All you have to do is want it." Mrs. Smith's listeners were naturally stunned by this shockingly insensitive outburst, and are demanding an apology. Most especially scandalized was the university's Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender, and Supporters Alliance. (At Harvard, apparently, if you can't be gay, you can be a gay supporter.) A representative of this outfit said: "Some of the content of Ms. Pinkett Smith's speech was extremely heteronormative, and made BGLTSA members feel uncomfortable." Conservatives could tell them a thing or two about feeling uncomfortable on campus.

■ John Barron was born in Texas, graduated from the University of Missouri, and studied Russian in the Navy. After serving as an intelligence officer in Berlin for two years, he embarked on a new career as a journalist, first for the *Washington Star* and then, from 1965 to 1991, for *Reader's Digest*. He never lost his interest in espionage, and he devoted the bulk of his work to exposing the evils of Communism in general and the schemes of the KGB in particular. One of his bestselling books prompted the Soviet spy agency to issue at least 370 damage assessments and other reports. It also tried to smear Barron personally, but without success: His articles and books continued to perform the vital function of educating ordinary Americans about the meaning and stakes of the Cold War. One of the finest reporters of his generation, Barron died on February 24, at the age of 75. R.I.P.

AT WAR

Progress

EVENTS in the Middle East have prompted a wave of "Was Bush Right?" soul-searching among liberals and gloating among conservatives. While recent headlines have been gratifying and even at times astounding, we should put a hold on the victory parade. Just as the steady diet of bad news in Iraq in 2004 didn't mean that Democrats, and even some former supporters of the war, were right to conclude that all was lost, the positive news lately doesn't mean we are assured of victory. Events will still bring nasty surprises, as they do in any war. And the forces resisting progress and reform in the Middle East—from Iran and Syria to the radicals in Iraq and the Palestinian territories—still have fearsome bite.

But the Bush administration can take considerable satisfaction in progress since the January 30 Iraqi elections. Most significant, street protests in Beirut have swept a Syrian-backed government from power in Lebanon, showing that the Middle East is not immune to the kind of "people power" rebellions that have toppled corrupt governments in other regions of the world.

Recent weeks have proved false several lines of argument against Bush policy. First, that Iraq is an irrecoverable mess and using it as a showcase to spread reform in the region a pipedream. In truth, the January 30 elections changed the political dynamic in Iraq and inspired the protesters in Lebanon, as many of them have attested. Second, that the "Arab street"—that hoariest of clichés of Middle East commentary—is always anti-American and on the side of radicalism. Crowds recently have protested terrorism in Iraq, and the Palestinian public has demanded the exit of Arafat cronies from the Palestinian Authority. A majority of people in these places, and in Lebanon, may not have a deep commitment to republican government. But neither are they delighted to be tyrannized. Third, that the absolute first step to peace and reform in the Middle East is forcing an agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis. In fact, recent months have shown that it is the other way around—reforming Israel's Arab interlocutors holds the key to any eventual peace deal. It is the shift from thug Arafat to (tentative) reformer Abbas that has infused Israeli–Palestinian relations with a new whiff of hope.

While Bush's critics should feel chastened, the president cannot take credit for everything that has taken place in recent weeks. Events outside his control have conspired in his favor. Arafat's death made possible the fresh start for the Palestinians. The Syrian overreaching in the spectacular assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri sparked the outrage that fueled the budding Cedar Revolution. But Bush's emphasis on freedom and insistence on reform has provided the context for these changes, and in the case of Egypt—where permanent president Hosni Mubarak now feels compelled to approve multiparty elections in some form—administration prodding led directly to the change. This raises an important point: As the Iraq invasion has demonstrated, military force is a blunt instrument and nation-building by the U.S. military a trying and costly business. It is preferable that local actors undertake change on their own, which is where all the other instruments of U.S. power come into play: the power of example, behind-the-scenes persuasion, financial pressure, and diplomacy, in concert with as many of our allies as possible (both France and Saudi Arabia have usefully called on Syria to quit Lebanon).

The weeks ahead are crucial. The administration must continue to insist on a total Syrian pullout from Lebanon. Syrian troops are almost beside the point. It is Syrian intelligence that runs Lebanon and milks it of resources to prop up the Assad regime back home. Assad will try to appease the administration with half-steps: a redeployment of troops here, a handover of an Iraqi insurgent leader there. When that doesn't work, Hezbollah—a tool of Syria and Iran—will likely turn to terrorist mayhem against the Lebanese population on the model of the Iraqi insurgency. The chaos will seek to make Lebanon

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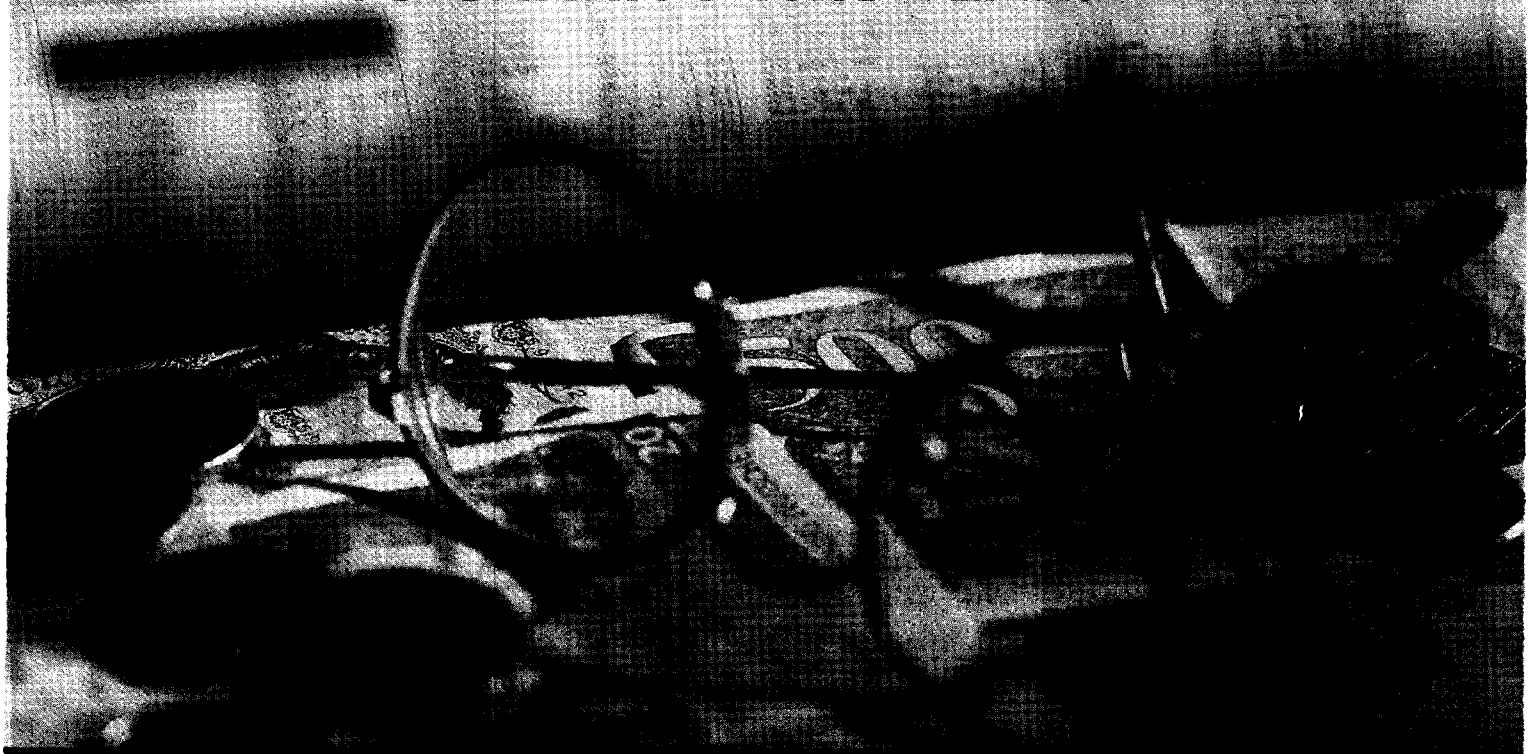

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ungovernable and support the notion—already bandied about by some liberals newly entranced with what they imagine to be realpolitik—that Syrian hegemony is necessary to maintain order there. But it is Syria that is ultimately the problem in Lebanon, and no instrument readily available to the administration should be spared in forcing an evacuation that could also bring the welcome demise of Assad's regime.

Meanwhile, it is crucial, of course, that the Iraqi project succeed, so that it continues as a positive model for the region. Attacks against U.S. forces have ebbed lately, although the insurgency still massacres Iraqi forces and civilians with disturbing ease. It is the political process that holds the most promise for marginalizing the insurgency, which is why the failure of negotiations so far to produce a prime minister has been so dismaying, even if it has been typical of the brinksmanship that has characterized post-Saddam Iraqi politics.

The last two months have been an Arab Spring. Whether it will bloom into something more enduring is impossible to know. The possibility itself is amazing. But that shouldn't be cause for giddiness. Optimism and principle will need, as always, the steadying influence of realism, prudence, and staying power. If they don't seem necessary right now, just wait—they will again soon.

AT WAR II

Can Liberals Learn?

RICHARD GWYN, an opponent of the Iraq war who writes for the left-wing *Toronto Star*, put it best. "It is time to set down in type the most difficult sentence in the English language. That sentence is short and simple. It is this: Bush was right." Here is another difficult sentence: Liberals hated freedom in the Middle East, in part because Bush supported it. And here is a third: In many ways, liberals fear it still.

Iraq's elections, the Cedar Revolution, and other signs of transformation put liberals in a quandary. Men and measures they deplore appear to be bringing changes—freedom, democracy, self-determination—that they approve of. Many, like Gwyn, give credit where credit is due. "Germany loves to criticize U.S. President George W. Bush's Middle East policies—just like Germany loved to criticize former President Ronald Reagan," wrote Claus Christian Malzahn in *Der Spiegel*. "But Reagan, when he demanded that Gorbachev remove the Berlin Wall, turned out to be right. Could history repeat itself?" "During the run-up to the invasion of Iraq," wrote Daniel Schorr in the *Christian Science Monitor*, "President Bush said that 'a liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region.' He may have had it right." Finally, the *New York Times*, in an astonishing editorial, acknowledged that "[t]he Bush administration is entitled to claim a healthy share of the credit for many of these advances. It boldly proclaimed the cause of Middle East democracy at a time when few in the West thought it had any realistic chance. And for all the negative consequences that flowed from the American invasion of Iraq, there could have been no democratic elections there this January if Saddam Hussein had still been in power."

Why were these perceptions so long in coming? Why are they evidently so hard to accept (cf. "negative consequences," above) even now?

George W. Bush is a powerful repellent. Call the roll of his qualities: rich, heir, Texan, evangelical, MBA, cocky, Republican, conservative. He walks with a swagger, and every other word is a Bushism. These qualities form a composite portrait of a person the average liberal must detest. Lucifer left Heaven because he could not stand God. What must liberals feel in the presence of Bush?

Bush's policy depends, where necessary, on war. Beautiful Lebanese women waving flags and gallant purple-fingered Iraqi voters recall Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa, earlier freedom fighters whom many liberals came to admire. They all represent people power. The power of infantry and carrier groups is something very different. Many modern liberals, remember, opposed not just Vietnam, but World War II, after the fact, for we had flattened Dresden, and dropped the atom bomb. Killing is always evil; when American armed forces kill, it implicates America in evil.

There is, finally, the soft bigotry of low expectations applied to the Arab world. Admiring people of color becomes condescension when universal standards fall by the wayside. A generation of Middle Eastern scholars have arraigned what they call the "Orientalist" mindset that looks for brutality and lust in Arab and Muslim cultures. A perverse consequence is that they excuse dictators, theocrats, and polygamy, so long as they are made locally. Robert Fisk, of the *Independent* of London, reminds the hopeful that "democracy, if it comes [to Lebanon], will be drenched with blood . . ." So keep the Syrian Baathists in charge.

Finally, there is the fear of unintended consequences. This is understandable, indeed inescapable. There is many a slip twixt cup and lip. Nineteen sixty-eight, 1848, 1789—the list of disappointed hopes is long. Even fulfilled hopes take hard work and luck, and encounter violence and mishaps along the way.

Bush, along with a handful of advisers and allies, was willing to take the risks. So is a solid majority of the American people, and now millions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries as well. Liberals can roll up their sleeves too, but they feel the strong tug of old habits.

THE LAW

Justice Kennedy's Fiat

JUSTICE ANTHONY KENNEDY, writing for a 5-4 majority of the Supreme Court, declared it unconstitutional to execute people for crimes committed when they were under 18. Our "evolving standards of decency" supposedly forbid such executions.

Now it is certainly possible that a criminal might be too young to be considered fully culpable for his actions. Justice Kennedy cited studies showing that many minors display a

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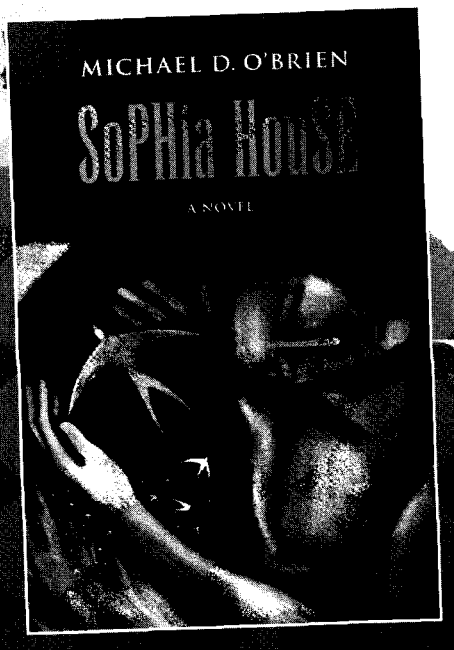

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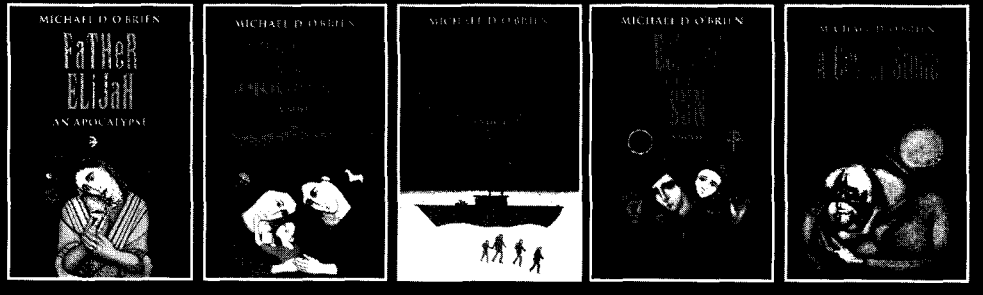

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"lack of maturity." (For this we need studies?) Figuring out whether a particular criminal was mature enough to deserve severe punishment can be tricky. That's why we have juries. Jurors are certainly capable of weighing a defendant's age as they deliberate over whether to impose the death penalty. Eighteen states have decided that it would be better to impose a blanket rule that minors will not be executed. One can think of good arguments for or against such a rule. That's why we have state legislatures: to decide such questions.

Justice Kennedy decided, however, that the 18 states that bar capital punishment for young murderers, and the 12 that bar capital punishment altogether, added up to a "national consensus" against executing the young. Having invented this "consensus," Kennedy then declared that it was unconstitutional for 20 states to continue to fall outside it. In support of his reasoning—if that's the word for it—he cited the "overwhelming weight of international opinion against the juvenile death penalty." He mentions two international conventions. The fact that the United States did not ratify one of them, and ratified another with the qualification that it retained the right to impose the juvenile death penalty, counted for nothing with Kennedy.

We do not believe that foreigners' opinion about any topic tells us anything about what the Constitution says about that topic. But the problem with Kennedy's opinion is not that it gives too much weight to foreign opinion. As Judge Bork notes (page 17), Kennedy is merely using foreign opinion to bolster a result he favors. The fact that most countries reject third-trimester abortion is not causing the Court to rethink its abortion jurisprudence. Since European governments reject capital punishment altogether, doesn't Kennedy have the premises in place to declare it unconstitutional? Such a ruling, however, would risk a public backlash. As much as Kennedy wants to show the world how much his "standards of decency" have "evolved," he does not want to take that risk. So Justice Kennedy and his majority are not declaring the death penalty unconstitutional. Yet.

notes & asides

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: At a recent social gathering a departing guest was described as being "three sheets to the wind." Everyone knew the fellow was intoxicated but no one was able to satisfactorily explain the exact meaning of the descriptive phrase.

I volunteered to come to the next social event with a full explanation. Time is running out and my research to date has been inconclusive.

"Sheets" and "wind" suggest something to do with sailing. So, as someone who has spent many hours sailing and perhaps a random hour or two in a tavern, I turn to you for help.

Thank you,
Ed Blanchfield
Weaverville, N.C.

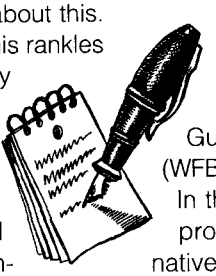
Dear Mr. Blanchfield: It . . . beats me! When you find out, let me know, please.

Cordially, WFB

■ *Dear Mr. Buckley:* As a newspaper journalist, it's part of my job to notice trends in language, and some of them drive me nuts. (One is the single-nounization of the word "media," e.g., "the media is . . .")

But one that has *really* been driving me nuts, for years now, is the disappearance in general usage of the word "sympathy" and its replacement with "empathy." Has anyone other than myself noticed this? In books and magazines and newspapers everywhere I look, no one is "sympathetic" or has "sympathy" with another's plight: It's always "I empathize with you," or "He didn't have much empathy."

The fact that "empathy" and "sympathy" do not mean the same thing is part of what gets my goat about this. But I think another reason this rankles me so much is that it simply reeks of Clinton-era feel-goodism: "Sympathy" has slightly condescending overtones: "I feel bad that you're suffering, but I feel fine other than that." "Empathy," on the other hand, has that "I feel your pain" smell, and is therefore, in the minds of most journalists, apparently, a more "democratic" word. The idea that some midtown executive "empathizes" with the homeless person he just handed a buck to stretches credulity, I think. But maybe that's just me.



In one of his novels, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn cites the Russian proverb, "You can't put sour cream on s***." Like so many liberal trends in language these days, it seems to me that replacing "sympathy" with "empathy" reflects a desire to slop the sour cream around.

Sincerely,
Kelley Dupuis
Chula Vista, Calif.

Dear Ms. Dupuis: I am, as George McGovern once described his support of his running mate, "a thousand percent" in agreement, and I think your analysis of motives of the abuse is persuasive. I empathize with your distress in the matter.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: From your column, "Personal to Johnny":

"Scene: *The Tonight Show.* Guests: David Susskind and me (WFB)."

In the absence of any context, the pronoun should be in the nominative case. Could the implied sentence be: "The guests are/were David Susskind and me"?

Say it isn't so, Bill.

Paula Mochel
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Ms. Mochel: Formal rules sometime yield to revisionist usage, and the ear should inform us when that is usurpation, or blueblooded succession.

Cordially,

—WFB

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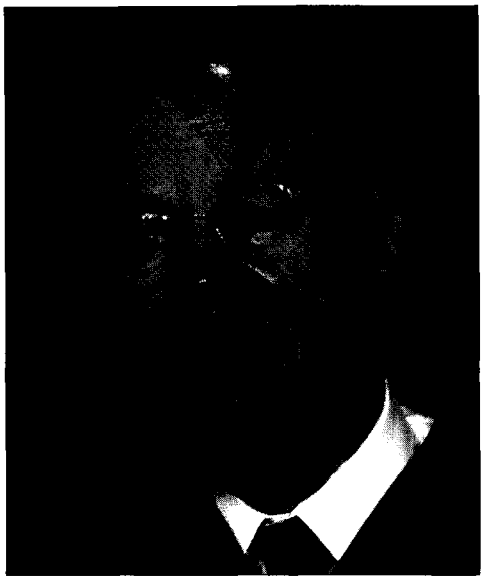

Justice Anthony Kennedy

■ THE LAW ■

Travesty Time, Again

In its death-penalty decision, the Supreme Court hits a new low

ROBERT H. BORK

THERE are plenty of reasons to deplore *Roper* v. *Simmons*, the Supreme Court's decision that a murderer under the age of 18 when he committed his crime cannot be given the death penalty. The Court majority once more exhibited for all to see that dazzling combination of lawlessness and moral presumption which increasingly characterizes its Bill of Rights jurisprudence.

The opinion starts unpromisingly, informing us that by "protecting even those convicted of heinous crimes, the Eighth Amendment reaffirms the duty of the government to respect the dignity of all persons." Readers may wonder about the dignity of the victim. Christopher Simmons, then 17, discussed with two companions his desire to murder someone, saying they could "get away with it" because they were minors. He and a juvenile confederate broke into the house of Shirley Crook, covered her eyes and mouth, and bound her hands with duct tape. They drove her to a state park, walked her onto a bridge, tied her hands and feet together with electrical wire, completely covered her whole face with duct tape, and threw her into the Meramec River, where, helpless, she drowned. Simmons bragged about the killing to friends, telling them he had killed a woman "because the bitch seen my face." Arrested, he confessed, and was sentenced to death.

The Supreme Court, though conceding that retribution and deterrence are valid functions of the death penalty, intoned that "we have established the propriety and affirmed the necessity of referring to 'the evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society' to determine which punishments are so disproportionate as to be cruel and unusual." That means the justices' views evolve, which is, by definition, progress. Justice Anthony Kennedy's opinion attempted to mask this unpalatable reality by claiming that the meaning of the Eighth Amendment had changed owing to a new "national consensus" against executing under-18 killers. This assertion of a "national consensus," however, was derived from the example of just 18 states that had faced the issue of granting an exemption to juvenile murderers out of the 38 with the death penalty. This dubious escalator means that the founders who allowed such punishments fall well short of our superior understanding of decency, as do the 20 states that today permit the execution of those younger than 18. In Simmons's case, it took the Missouri legislature, the governor, a unanimous jury, and a judge to bring him to death row. All now stand branded, five to four, as morally indecent. The majority did not, and could not, explain why any state is forbidden to make a policy choice—denied its constitutional sovereignty—because other states disagree with it.

Trying its hand at psychology, the *Roper* majority argued that neither deterrence nor retribution supported the death penalty for killers under the age of 18. As for deterrence, the Court said, the likelihood that teenagers engage in cost-benefit analysis that attaches any weight to the possibility of execution is so remote as to be virtually non-existent. This in a case where the murderer counted on his minority to "get away with it." This from a Court that finds teenage girls sufficiently mature to decide on abortion without parental knowledge or consent. Retribution was discounted on the theory that young killers, apparently without exception, are less culpable than presumably more thoughtful adult murderers. The Court ignored the fact that juries, unlike the Court, do not decide such issues categorically but by evaluation of the individual and must take youth into account as one mitigating factor.

Retribution was also ruled out without considering its indispensable role in the criminal-justice system. The mixture of reprobation and expiation in retribution is sometimes required as a dramatic mark of our sense of great evil and to reinforce our respect for ourselves and the dignity of others. None of this was examined by the Court. Its steady piecemeal restriction of the death penalty—now "reserved for a narrow category of crimes and offenders"—suggests that the Court is on a path to abolish capital punishment altogether even though the Constitution four times explicitly assumes its legitimacy.

The most ominous aspect of *Roper*, however, is the Court majority's reliance

JASON REED/REUTERS

Mr. Bork is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, professor at Ave Maria Law School, and visiting professor at the University of Richmond Law School.

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upon foreign decisions and unratified treaties. The opinion cited "the stark reality that the United States is the only country in the world that continues to give official sanction to the juvenile death penalty," a fact the Court found "instructive" in interpreting the American Constitution. Since the nations of Europe have, among others, abolished the death penalty, the Court seems to be suggesting that we (or rather the justices) should do likewise. After all, "[w]e have previously recognized the relevance of the views of the international community in determining whether a punishment is cruel and unusual." If the meaning of a document over 200 years old can be affected by the current state of world opinion, James Madison and his colleagues labored in vain.

Article 37 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, we are reminded, expressly prohibits capital punishment for those under 18. The United States—almost uniquely among countries—did not ratify it. Indeed, this country has never accepted any international covenant containing the prohibition in Article 37. "In sum, it is fair to say that the United States now stands alone in a world that has turned its face against the juvenile death penalty." To accept such covenants would, of course, be attempting to alter our Constitution by treaty. Perhaps that is why the Court hedged: "The opinion of the world community, while not controlling our outcome, does provide respected and significant confirmation for our own conclusions." This "underscores the centrality of those same rights within our own heritage of freedom." That comes pretty close to accepting foreign control of the American Constitution.

What is really alarming about *Roper* and other cases citing foreign law (six justices now engage in that practice) is that the Court, in tacit coordination with foreign courts, is moving toward a global bill of rights. Neither our courts nor the foreign courts are bound by actual constitutions. Prof. Lino Graglia was quite right when he said that "the first and most important thing to know about American constitutional law is that it has virtually nothing to do with the Constitution." That is certainly the case with the Bill of Rights. From abortion to homosexual sodomy, from religion to political speech and pornography, from capital punishment to discrimination on the basis of race and sex, the Court is steadily remaking American political, social, and cultural life. As Justice Antonin Scalia once said in dissent, "Day by day, case by case, [the Court] is busy designing a Constitution for a country I do not recognize."

The courts of the United Kingdom, Canada, Israel, and almost all Western countries are doing the same thing, replacing the meaning of their charters with their own preferences. Nor are these judicial alterations random. The culture war evident in the United States is being waged internationally, both within individual nations and in international institutions and tribunals. It is a war for dominance between two moral visions of the future. One is the liberal-elite preference for radical personal autonomy and the other is the general public's desire for some greater degree of community and social authority. Elite views are fairly uniform across national boundaries, and since American and foreign judges belong to elites and respond to elite views, judge-made constitutions tend to converge. It hardly matters what particular constitutions say or were understood to mean by those who adopted them.

Judges are not, of course, the only forces for a new elite global morality. Governments and non-governmental organizations are actively promoting treaties, conventions, and new institutions (the International Criminal Court, for example) that embody their view that sovereignty and nation-states are outmoded and that we must move toward regional or even global governance. American self-government and sovereignty would be submerged in a web of international regulations. The Supreme Court, in decisions like *Roper,* adds constitutional law to the web. That is the one strand, given our current acceptance of judicial supremacy, that cannot be rejected democratically. What is clear is that foreign elites understand the importance of having the Supreme Court on their side, which is precisely why their human-rights organizations have begun filing amicus briefs urging our Supreme Court to adopt the foreign, elite view of the American Constitution.

Roper is one more reason that it is urgent that the president nominate and battle for justices who will rein in a Court run amok. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH**

A New Word, A New Day

Where 'gay marriage' is leading us

DAVID FRUM

"HETERONORMATIVE": There's a word to add to your vocabulary. Very, very soon you'll be hearing it a lot.

On February 26, Jada Pinkett Smith, wife of Hollywood star Will Smith, sparked a fierce little controversy at Harvard after receiving an award. In her thank-you speech, Pinkett Smith told the story of her life. She described how she had grown up as the child of two teenage heroin addicts and overcome adversity to build a successful career and a happy marriage. She concluded:

"Women, you can have it all—a loving man, devoted husband, loving children, a fabulous career. They say you gotta choose. Nah, nah, nah. We are a new generation of women. We got to set a new standard of rules around here. You can do whatever it is you want. All you have to do is want it."

What could possibly be offensive about this message?

According to a complaint issued by the Harvard Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender, and Supporters Alliance, as reported by the *Harvard Crimson*, Pinkett Smith's words "implied that standard sexual relationships are only between males and females." "Our position is that the comments weren't homophobic, but the content was specific to male-female relationships," said one of the Alliance's co-chairs. The other added: "I don't think [Pinkett Smith] meant to be offensive, but I just don't think she was that thoughtful."

Mr. Frum blogs daily at www.NationalReview.com. His most recent book is *An End to Evil: Strategies for Victory in the War on Terror*, with Richard Perle.

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The organizers of the award ceremony agreed to apologize for the offensive remarks. PC silliness from an out-of-the-mainstream campus? Possibly. But then there's this: On March 3, the *Boston Globe* took Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney to task for "insisting that every child 'has a right to a mother and a father . . . '" In today's context, the *Globe* argued, praise for the traditional family can be understood only as "ignorance" or "mean-spirited politics."

And finally, this: Prodded by its famously high-handed courts, Canada is now amending its laws to accommodate same-sex marriage. The province of Ontario has passed a law deleting the words "wife," "husband," "widow," and "widower" from every statute in which they appear. The federal same-sex-marriage bill now before the parliament voids the term "natural parent" wherever it occurs in Canadian law and replaces it with the term "legal parent." Should the federal bill pass, motherhood and fatherhood will have been deprived of all juridical meaning in Canada—and children will belong to any adult or group of adults to which the state may wish to assign them.

These three events, which are simultaneously comic, grotesque, and sinister, add up to an important glimpse into our future.

For years, advocates of same-sex marriage have pledged that their big idea will have little or no effect on the 97 percent or so of the population that is not gay. All they wanted, they said, was that marriage rights be "extended" to a very small minority: What possible difference could that make to anyone else? But as same-sex marriage advances from slogan to reality, we are learning that it will make a very big difference to us all.

Same-sex marriage does not extend marriage. It transforms marriage.

To make same-sex marriage a reality, as the Canadians are demonstrating, the law must abolish the concept of "husbands," "wives," "mothers," and "fathers." The law does not abolish these concepts just for a previously excluded few. The law must abolish these concepts for *everybody*.

True, marriage in its old form will continue to be consecrated for many years to come. Priests, ministers, and rabbis will pronounce their ancient words over eager young brides and grooms. But the old words will not long disguise the new realities.

Andrew Sullivan, that endlessly ingenious advocate of same-sex marriage, tells us that he and those who think like him aspire only to alter something they call "civil marriage," implying that there exists some distinction between marriage as it is recognized by the state and marriage as it is recognized by the church. But of course, while North America has long had civil *ceremonies*, it has never till now witnessed attempts by governments to substitute a new and antagonistic definition of civil *marriage* for marriage as it has been defined by Western religious traditions.

ZAK BRIAN/GAMMA

Jada Pinkett Smith: She has it all.

At minimum, state recognition of same-sex marriage amounts to an astounding act of self-repudiation, of digging up and discarding the roots that have nurtured and still sustain Western liberal democratic societies. Very possibly, same-sex marriage will provoke dangerous conflict between the deepest beliefs and the controlling laws of Western society, with a new generation of same-sex activists agitating to remove tax-exempt status from churches and synagogues that "discriminate" against same-sex couples.

To what end?

One of the most important lessons to be learned from the Canadian experience is that, despite all the passion they bring to the issue of marriage in the abstract, very few homosexuals wish for marriage for themselves. There are about 24 million Canadians between the ages of 18 and 65. It's a reasonable guess that some 750,000 of them are gay. In June and July 2003, the two largest English-speaking provinces, Ontario and British Columbia, began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Within the first six months, some 300 Canadian same-sex couples had been married in B.C. Within the first year, about 4,000 Canadian couples had been married in Ontario.

Since then, the number of same-sex marriages seems to have dropped off. Current statistics are hard to come by, but it's a good guess that nearly two years after same-sex marriage arrived in Canada some 98 percent of adult Canadian gays have chosen not to avail themselves of their new legal right.

Which raises the question: Why bother? Why make a revolution for a prize for which so few of the revolutionaries feel any personal enthusiasm? The question takes us back to that vocabulary word with which we started: "heteronormativity."

I am sure that the vast majority of those who today advocate same-sex marriage would ridicule the attack on Jada Pinkett Smith as a case of academic PC gone insane. And I am sure that they would be perfectly sincere. But sometimes it is difficult for those who passionately espouse a position to think logically about where their own commitments are leading them.

For the story of Jada Pinkett Smith is not some weird excess of the demand for same-sex marriage: It is the logical, predictable, and necessary consequence of that demand. The demand for same-sex marriage is not really a demand for a practical solution to practical problems. If it were, we would not hear so much talk about how the defense of marriage is like the defense of racial segregation; we would not hear so much anger and abuse; we would be talking about powers of attorney and tenancies-in-common rather than about discrimination and exclusion. Those amazingly candid Harvard students have made explicit the unspoken truth: This is not a debate about extending an institution, it is a debate about overthrowing a norm; not about reconstruction, but about destruction.

For once, an academic PC power play was neither comedy nor horror story: It was instead a public-service announcement. **NR**

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■ THE NATION

All-American

Gov. Bob Ehrlich kicks tail in Maryland

JAY NORDLINGER

Anne Arundel County, Md.

PRESIDENT Bush is at a community college, microphone in hand. This is one of his "real people" events, and the focus is education, plus jobs. Bush is a kind of talk-show host—Oprah for a morning. Onstage with him are the president of the college, a local hospital administrator, the real people (two inspiring students) . . . and "the governor's here, how 'bout that?"

The governor is Bob Ehrlich, a 47-year-old Republican. He says to Bush, "I want some extra credit for wearing my W tie today." His pink tie is decorated with the president's key initial, a souvenir from the '04 campaign. "Hot item," Bush says. But "I don't know about the pink." Later, he refers to Ehrlich as Bobby. "They call you Bobby?" he checks. "Absolutely, Mr. President," says Ehrlich. "You can call me anything you want . . ."

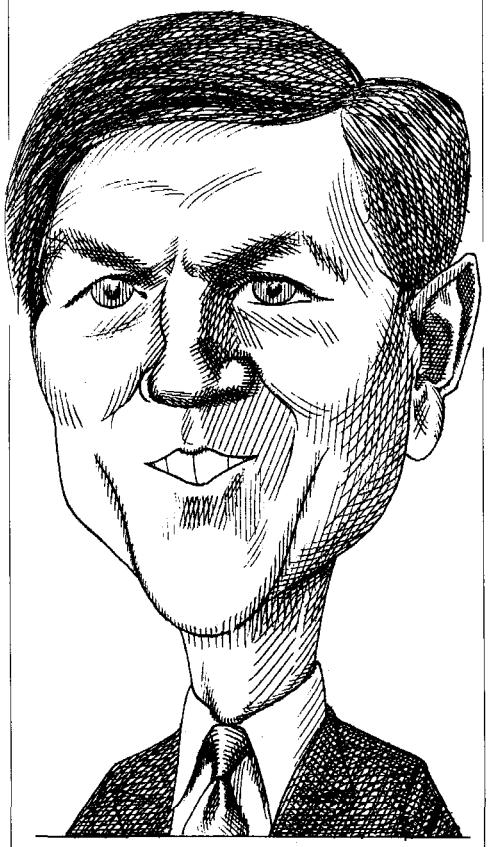
The Republican party calls him one of its favorite governors. A former football player, he looks a bit like a Ken doll, and thinks like a scholar of the American Enterprise Institute. He's also a canny pol. Three years ago, he won unexpectedly in one of the most Democratic states in the Union. And he is remarkably frank about his principles and beliefs.

For example, can you imagine a governor who, on a radio talk show, dismisses multiculturalism as "bunk" and "crap"? You have one in Ehrlich. Repeatedly, he has called the Democratic party on racial dirty-dealing. And he scolds the business community, saying they lack spine, that they won't support their own interests, that, indeed, they suffer from "Patty Hearst syndrome." "You identify with your captors," he told an assembly of businessmen and their lobbyists last year. "We need you to influence votes. We need you to be dangerous."

The governor's wife is not shy, either. Kendel Ehrlich is a former public defender and prosecutor who in 2003 addressed a conference on domestic violence. Talking about the effect of popular culture on girls in particular, she quipped that she ought to "shoot" Britney Spears. She apologized for this unfortunate way of expressing herself, but she also won many fans among parents nationwide.

Ehrlich is discussing her, back at home in Annapolis, following the Bush show, when the First Lady comes in, right on cue. She's holding their year-old son, Joshua, who has an older brother, Drew. The governor tells her, 'The president said, 'Two more kids.'" Responds Mrs. Ehrlich, "Clearly he doesn't know how old I am." (North of 40.)

The governor—who pronounces his name "Er-lick," not "Air-lick"—grew up outside Baltimore, in a just-folks community. He would later represent similar communities, in the Maryland house and in Congress. "My congressional district was the definition of Reagan Democrat," he says. "The Democrats had a 70-30, or 65-35, advantage, and it was as safe a Republican seat as you're ever going to find, at least for me." When he ran for governor, he notes, he won in places where, only a generation ago, "people would spit if they heard the word 'Republican.'"



ROMAN GENN

Gov. Bob Ehrlich

He went to Princeton, where he did his undergraduate thesis on Solzhenitsyn, and later to Wake Forest Law School. Among his models are Churchill ("He stood on principle, and he was willing to lose"), Reagan, and Jack Kemp. "As an athlete, I was drawn to him, and I loved his inclusive message"—the assertion that the Republican party should be available and attractive to all. Ehrlich describes his views as "a mixture of conservatism and libertarianism."

He was elected to Congress in the smash Republican year of 1994, and eight years later decided to run for governor. It was no sure thing: First, there hadn't been a Republican governor elected in 36 years (and he was Agnew). Second, the Democratic contender was a heavyweight: Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, a daughter of RFK. Many people considered her a shoo-in for the Governor's Mansion, and she was even talked about—briefly, a little fancifully—as a running mate for Gore in 2000. This was when she was merely lieutenant governor.

As Ehrlich explains, he had a "terrific setup" in Congress: safe seat, plum committee, a leadership post, an easy commute between district and Capitol Hill. "I had it made, could have stayed there a long time, done my thing." But he took a risk, running for governor. Among the challenges was money: "When you're on a [nearly] 40-year losing streak, your fundraising base tends to dry up." But Ehrlich wound up outraising KKT. Another challenge was uniting the state GOP (such as it was). Some conservatives didn't like him—he is a self-described "moderate" on abortion—but he'd say, "I'm as good as you get." They signed on. Ehrlich beat KKT by four points.

He had campaigned unapologetically, against gun control, against increasing the minimum wage. He prides himself on consistency, and the credibility it brings: He has been the same, he says, as Delegate Ehrlich, as Con-

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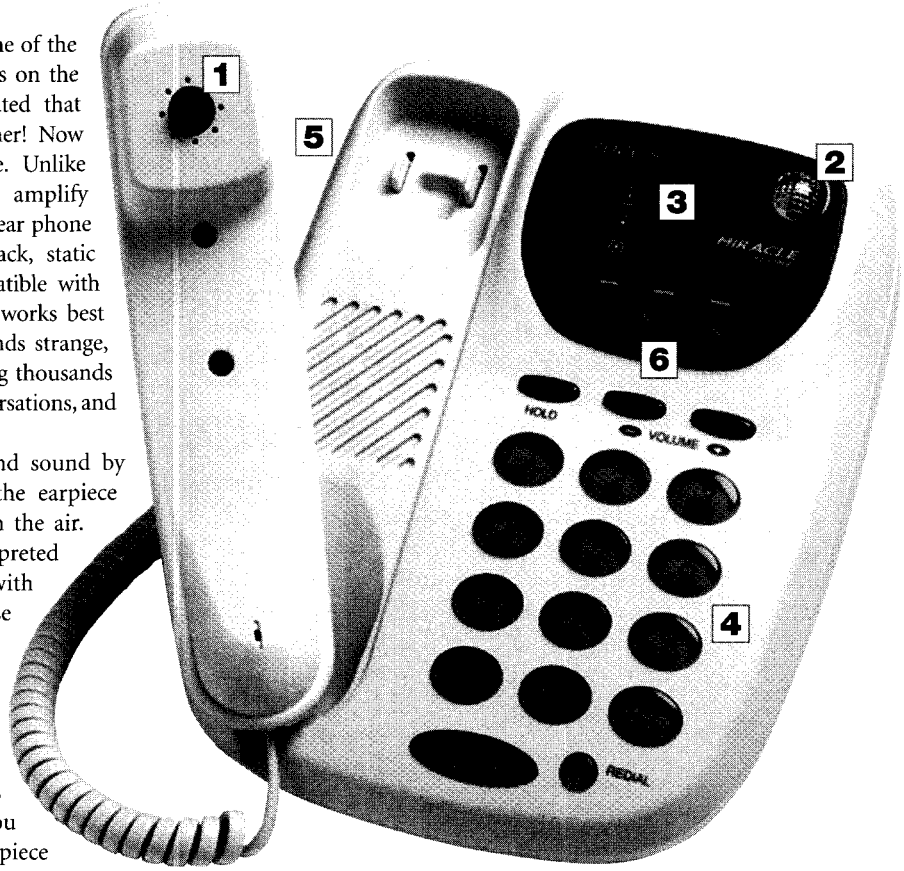
"At long last...I can hear my granddaughter's voice on the phone again!"

The Miracle Phone uses conduction, not just amplification, to make phone calls clearer—and everyone in the family can use it.

If you have hearing loss, you know that one of the biggest challenges is hearing conversations on the phone. You may have gotten so frustrated that you've stopped using the phone altogether! Now there is a solution: the Miracle Phone. Unlike other amplified phones, which simply amplify sound, the Miracle Phone allows you to hear phone conversations clearly without the feedback, static and background noises – and it's compatible with hearing aids! In fact, the Miracle Phone works best if you don't hold it up to your ear. Sounds strange, right? But this "odd" technology is helping thousands of people rediscover the joy of phone conversations, and reconnect with family and friends.



Use your head. Ordinary phones send sound by air conduction. The small speaker in the earpiece vibrates and sends sound waves through the air. They're received by your ear and interpreted as speech by your brain. For those with normal hearing, that's fine. But for those who are hard of hearing, those words quickly become "lost in translation". The exceptional Miracle Phone works by bone conduction. It sends sound waves via air conduction, but it also sends out sound wave pulsations with its DirectVibe™ Pulsator in the earpiece. You actually feel them when you hold the earpiece against your head – more specifically, against the bone right behind your ear. The sound waves go straight to the speech recognition center in your brain without ever passing through your ear. It's a totally innovative, efficient way to hear phone conversations!

Hearing aids and phones didn't mix... until now! Introducing the Miracle Phone

Loaded with practical features. In addition to its unique technology, the Miracle Phone also has top-of-the-line features that make it a pleasure to use. It has a Visual Ringer that flashes when a call comes in—another handy feature for the hearing impaired. You control the volume of both the ringer and the incoming voice. With its sleek, modern design, it's also easy for those with no hearing loss to use. There's also an indicator that lights up when the line is in use, and its extra-large keypad makes dialing easy.

How the Miracle Phone works

The Miracle Phone's patented DirectVibe™ Pulsator transduces sound waves via bone conduction, bypassing the conventional auditory process. By placing the DirectVibe Pulsator at strategic locations on your head, sound vibrations travel from the pulsator to the speech recognition center in your brain.

Loaded with Features!

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3. Visual Volume Indicator
4. Extra-Large Keypad
5. Hearing Aid Compatible
6. In-Use Indicator
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gressman Ehrlich, and as Governor Ehrlich. He does not necessarily tailor his message to different audiences. He says what he thinks, hoping to persuade those he can.

Going for governor, he campaigned robustly in black precincts and other areas "where Ellen had lost huge." Who's Ellen? Ellen Sauerbrey, the Republican nominee in 1994 and 1998. The first time, she was the victim of voting irregularities (ballot fraud, to put it more plainly). The second time, she was the victim of racial dirty tricks, as practiced consummately by the Democratic operative Bob Shrum. As Ehrlich says, "the use of race was spectacular, it was offensive, it was divisive, and it was successful."

In his own contest, he would ask voters to send 'em a message: "The first time the race card is unsuccessful will be the last time it's played. But you have to make it unsuccessful. Because as long as it's successful, they will play it." Ehrlich won only 15 percent of blacks, but he had been unafraid, and made some inroads. Thinking of recent electoral history, he says, "American politics is healthier with Bob Shrum sidelined."

Ehrlich's running mate was Michael Steele. "My lieutenant governor is very threatening," says Ehrlich—threatening to white liberal Democrats, for Steele is black and, like Ehrlich, a Reaganite, Kempite Republican. The governor cites an editorial run by the *Baltimore Sun* two days before the election: "They denigrated me, of course, and then they got to Mike, and in a few words showed the world what they are." Here was a guy with an abundance of experience and talent—Ehrlich recites a list—and the *Sun* wrote, "[Steele] brings little to the team but the color of his skin." That, says Ehrlich, "was a perfect expression of how they view the world."

The governor has thought deeply about the GOP and race. Facing black voters, "white Republicans start out with two and a half strikes" against them. "We ask only that they not make a called third strike before they find out what we're about, what we're doing. Words are cheap in this business; you build credibility through deeds." And merely appointing blacks gets Republicans nothing—nothing. "If Condi Rice were a Democrat, there'd be parades for her, she'd be on the cover of *Time* magazine every week."

Upon taking office, Ehrlich proved himself a staunch foe of taxes, vetoing or squelching a number of hikes. Though a politician and lawyer, he has great sympathy for businessmen and entrepreneurs. "Small-business owners are my political base. I admire them. Many of them started with nothing—took a chance, put up the house, pursued the American dream." He's big on school reform, tort reform, Social Security reform ("a no-brainer"). He's against gay marriage ("not even debatable"), the drug war ("a monumental failure"), and McCain-Feingold ("a terrible law").

Here is his stance on abortion: He's opposed to public funding and partial-birth abortion; he's in favor of parental notification and parental consent ("with judicial bypass"). He is otherwise "pro-choice." He does not regard abortion as murder.

It could be that this issue—abortion—will keep him off a national ticket. But who knows? Ehrlich has many strengths, and he is popular throughout Maryland, this home of Barbara Mikulski and other liberal stalwarts. He says he will decide this summer whether to run for reelection.

In the meantime, he's a bit of a folk hero among the country's conservatives—in part for the enemies he has earned: the trial lawyers, the teachers' unions, the "establishment media," as he puts it. Indeed, Ehrlich has stiffed the *Baltimore Sun*, forbidding his administration to talk to two of its writers. He claims a pattern of unfairness, "but let me boil it down for you: There was this classic headline: 'Ehrlich Okays Secret Land Deal,' which was accurate, except that there was no deal, it wasn't secret, and I didn't okay it." Was there land involved? "Yes!" And after he banned the *Sun* scribes, "I had many governors—Democrats—call me to say, 'Good for you. You have done something I have always wanted to do.'"

Bright, personable, serious, fun—a winner of elections. Again, who knows? But even if he doesn't rise higher, there's nothing wrong with being an effective, and surprising, governor of Maryland. **NR**

■ **AFGHANISTAN**

A Great, and Unreported, Story

In Kabul and beyond, three and a half years after invasion

MARY MATALIN

THE first free election in Afghanistan's history was a seminal event for that country and for our own. With their votes, Afghans risked their own personal security and advanced our national security: They implemented the first concrete act of President Bush's transformative foreign-policy strategy to replace tyranny and terrorism with liberty and opportunity. To borrow a phrase, Afghans' first step for individual freedom was a giant leap for world peace.

Despite the significance of these events—their potential to transform the Islamic world—both Western and Middle Eastern media have devoted scant coverage to them. My friend Rush Limbaugh and I were both frustrated by—and curious about—this virtual news blackout, and were delighted when USAID gave us an opportunity to join a delegation to see the progress in Afghanistan for ourselves.

At 30,000 feet, the appeal of Afghanistan to its many invaders is clear. Flying over the miles of snowcapped mountains and sweeping plateaus positioned in one of the world's most geographically strategic intersections, I thought of the ancient conquerors—Darius, Alexander, Genghis Khan—who swept across this land; of the traders who forged the Silk Road and fused European and Asian cultures; of the British and Russians whose clandestine Great Game left Afghanistan a legacy of institutional bribery; even of the

Mary Matalin is a former assistant to President George W. Bush and former counselor to Vice President Cheney.

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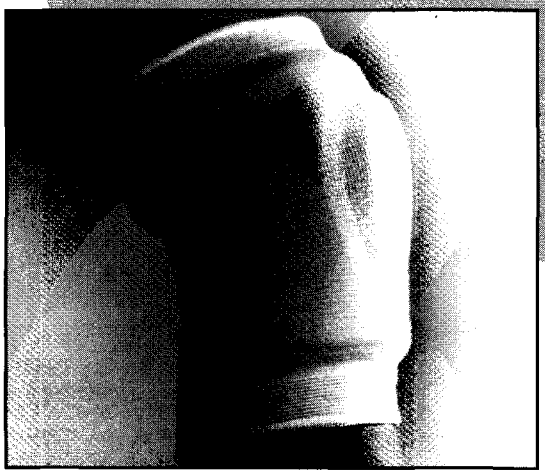

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American hippies who invaded in pursuit of the most meditative mountains—and (allegedly) best hashish—in the world.

This romantic history receded rapidly with altitude. Closer to the ground, Afghanistan's tragic modern history becomes all too evident. Between the savagery of the Soviets and the Taliban, and the devastating civil war, the once lush land has been reduced to a giant pile of smoky, gray rubble; as we descended into Kabul, the crystalline blue majestic aerial Afghanistan gave way to a muddy, outdated airbase secured by barbed wire, cement roadblocks, and lots of guys with big guns.

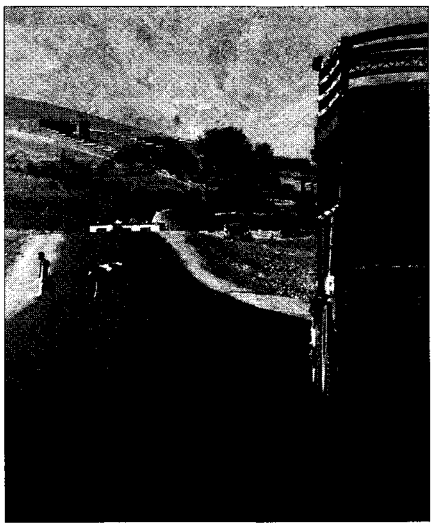
While Rush and I were trying to digest this forbidding terrain, the USAID folks looked as if they were having a family reunion. All the soldiers seemed similarly pumped. Oddly, everyone was most enthusiastic about all the mud, which covered everything and everyone. Ushering us into "hard cars," each with "shooters" riding shotgun, the locals gave us our first dose of Afghanistan reality: The revered mud was the result of a record snowfall that could reverse the ravages of a seven-year drought. It also tamped down the usual oppressive dust—dust so pervasive it produced the infamous "Kabul cough."

The unnatural dust is the upshot of decades of deforestation at the hands of would-be conquerors. It is not easy for a Western mind to comprehend the devastation that occurred in our generation. In addition to the deforestation, the Soviets and Taliban obliterated ancient cities; poisoned wells; mined, mortared, and laid waste to irrigation systems, roads, schools, and entire villages. Historic landmarks, like the Bamiyan Buddhas, were vaporized. Millions fled the country; those who remained were transported culturally to a 12th-century Islamic-extremist world.

There is a jarring incongruity between Afghans' attitude and their environment. Despite the terror that defines their recent existence, they display no signs of self-pity or despair, no sense of entitlement. We heard the same refrain everywhere we went, from old and young: "Thank you, America," and "Please do not leave." They want to rebuild their country themselves—but need us to help them with the tools. They admire America, and understand our mutual interest in making Afghanistan a modern country to prevent terrorists from reconstituting. They also have a keen grasp of how their democratic experiment could transform the Muslim world.

It is hard not to share their confidence that they will succeed in building a modern Muslim state; physical transformation is in evidence everywhere.

One of President Hamid Karzai's highest priorities was to rebuild Afghanistan's transportation infrastructure. Bombed-out roads, collapsed bridges, and blocked tunnels literally closed the country down. Afghans view the road from Kabul to Kandahar as a symbol of Afghanistan's promise: The 300-mile strip of smooth asphalt, along with hundreds of additional miles of newly regraded roads, has dramatically improved quality of life and accelerated economic growth. The roads



Section of the newly paved Kabul-to-Kandahar road

provided the mobility needed to expedite commerce and to construct canals, sanitation projects, power-generation facilities, housing, and market places. Progress is obvious. Giant cranes and massive scaffolding hover over the bombed-out buildings. Trucks full of construction materials and farm produce speed along beside taxis—and us, in our armored humvees and bulletproof van. (We are told such transportation is necessary for our security, but the people all wave and smile at us from their curbside kiosks full of goods that were unattainable until recently.)

The infrastructure improvements are making a dent in some of the worst living conditions in the world. The scourges of mothers' dying in childbirth, infant mortality, and infectious disease are declining steadily as hundreds of health clinics and hospitals go up and millions of children receive vaccinations. The astronomical illiteracy rates, too, are being eroded: Thousands of new schools and tens of thousands of new teachers are meeting the pent-up demand for education. Explosive enrollment has quadrupled the student population from 900,000 to 5 million, 40 percent of which is female. We saw some innovative programs, including a Laura Bush concept: accelerated classes for older girls left illiterate by the Taliban.

Keeping pace with the restoration of basic services is the even more difficult process of building institutions that undergird stability and democracy, institutions that are either totally foreign to the Afghans or had been savagely purged from among them:

A credible electoral process. Every Afghan tells you a proud story of his or her first vote. A general told me how remote villages overcame logistical nightmares by transporting ballot boxes on the backs of donkeys. Karzai has skillfully managed the potentially disruptive ancient-warlord governing system, getting the local bosses to buy into the concept of running for power in the upcoming parliamentary elections, rather than killing their way in. He is filling the new government with reformers, including women.

A free press. We saw fledgling but far-reaching print, radio, and TV operations. A disproportionate number of students we met want to be journalists. We asked one girl why. She replied, "We want to tell the truth."

Rule of law. A judiciary is forming, the militias are disarming, and the Afghan National Army is growing. The weapon-demobilization program is succeeding: We saw surreal acres of heavy weaponry collected from the former warriors.

Other hallmarks of a modern state are emerging—slowly by Western standards, but Afghans apply their own realistic standards. They are motivated by what they have overcome, rather than discouraged by how much more remains to be done.

The over $8 billion in international aid has, obviously, played a significant part in Afghanistan's progress; but there are three other factors that are making it pos-

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sible. The first is Karzai himself, an exemplar of Afghan courage whose father was assassinated by the Taliban. He told a story of being stranded with eleven of his tribesmen on a mountaintop, with the Taliban in pursuit. Expecting imminent death, he used his little remaining cellphone power to call the BBC and make them air his claim that Afghanistan would never surrender. It is with this moment in mind that he goes about the monumental business of democracy-building.

The second factor is U.S. ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan American with decades of experience in defense and diplomacy, who knows not only his native country inside out, but the Beltway levers of power as well. And the third is the unsung but enormously effective PRTs—the Provisional Reconstructive Teams of troops and aid workers who go across the country doing the hands-on work of hundreds of democracy-building programs. They feel an electric pride in their work.

Security remains difficult in places—the day we were in Kandahar, soldiers under attack shot one bad guy in the neck and captured another—and that slows down reconstruction. But because President Bush has made "development" the third "D" in his national-security strategy, along with defense and diplomacy, the troops have figured out on the ground how to accelerate the stabilization of this former terrorist haven by safeguarding the developers. Their efforts have also forged a bond of trust with the Afghan people. On one of our troop visits we heard how earlier that day they had been called to Medevac vehicular-accident victims hours from base. The husband did not want to leave his injured wife, but gave his toddler son to the soldiers—an unimaginable occurrence in the pre-PRT era.

In our four days, we only scratched the surface of Afghanistan's astounding progress, but one thing is clear: This success story is *not* being told. The Afghans' concern—which Americans should share—is that if the story remains untold, the promise of the democracy-building policy could be undermined. Our homeland security depends on that policy; Americans need their free press to try as hard as the new Afghan free press to get the truth out. **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY**

The Election Chaos Act Of 2005

Hillary Clinton wants to ditch the rules

BYRON YORK

"We have spent a lot of time and American lives and money to secure the right to vote in Afghanistan and Iraq," Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton told reporters on February 17. "We have to do everything we can to ensure that all voters have a reasonable opportunity to register and cast their vote, without becoming the victims of deceptive practices, fear, or intimidation."

That might sound like an entirely reasonable sentiment, except that Mrs. Clinton did not, in fact, utter those two sentences consecutively. Although she briefly recognized that democracy is on the move around the world, her expression of concern about deceptive practices, fear, and intimidation came at another point in her remarks. And she wasn't talking about obstacles to voting in Afghanistan or Iraq. She was talking about the United States.

Senator Clinton's speech came as she introduced—along with fellow Democratic senators John Kerry and Barbara Boxer—legislation called the "Count Every Vote Act of 2005." The bill might best be characterized as the ultimate wish-list of Democrats who believe that rumored voting irregularities in Ohio cost the party the White House in 2004. Although its stated purpose is to "count every vote," its actual effect would be to make it impossible for polling-place officials to determine which votes should be counted and which should not.

The Democrats' bill would make it impossible for polling-place officials to determine which votes should be counted and which should not.

Take, for example, a provision requiring states to allow anyone to register to vote on Election Day itself, and then vote, and then "have that vote counted in the same manner as a vote cast by an eligible voter who properly registered during the regular registration period." That would give state officials virtually no time to determine whether an applicant was in fact eligible to vote.

Then there is the provision requiring states to "accept and process a voter registration application for an election for federal office unless there is a material omission or information that specifically affects the eligibility of a voter." The bill specifies that an applicant's failure to provide a Social Security number, a driver's-license number, or any proof of citizenship may *not* be considered a "material omission," that is, may not be used to judge whether the applicant is eligible to vote. In fact, it is not clear what—other than, say, not knowing one's own name—*would* constitute a "material omission" under the Clinton standard. In any event, a person who is not registered, who is not a citizen, and who has no identification would be able to show up at a polling place and register and vote.

Another feature liable to abuse is the provision requiring states to allow anyone to cast a provisional ballot anywhere in the state, regardless of where that person may—or may not—be registered to vote. That could allow someone who is not registered to cast provisional ballots at as many poll locations around the state as he could physically visit in a day.

The bill also contains a provision requiring states to allow felons to vote, once they are out of jail and off parole. What Senator Clinton calls "civic participation by ex-offenders" equates the denial of voting rights to felons with the historic denial of voting rights to people on the basis of race and sex. The bill would also require states to enact a sort of felons-outreach pro-

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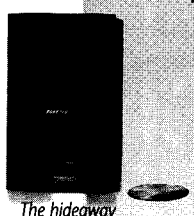

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gram, ordering that each state "shall notify any qualified ex-offender who resides in the state that such qualified ex-offender has the right to vote in an election for federal office."

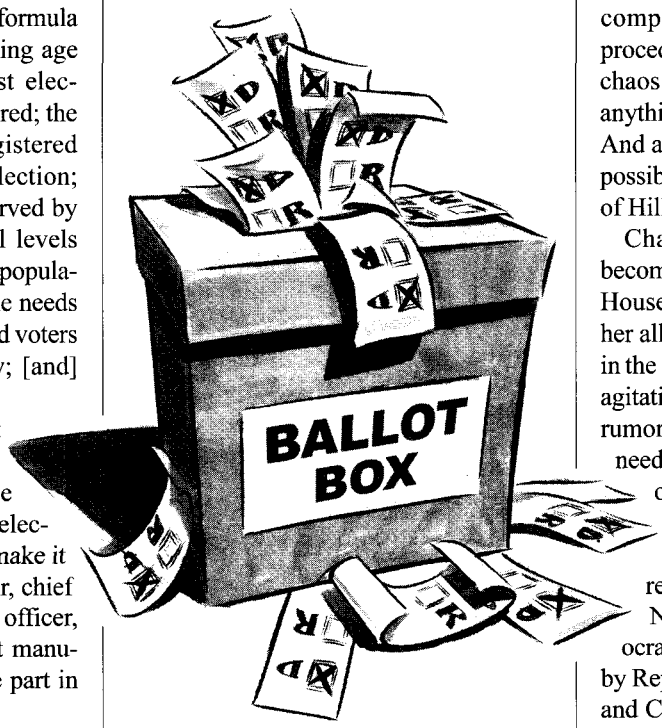
Beyond the issue of voter eligibility, the bill would also create a federal mandate for the length of lines at polling places. It would require the federal Election Assistance Commission—a body created after the 2000 Florida recount controversy—to issue standards on waiting time permissible for every polling place in a state to ensure "an equal waiting time for all voters in the state." To accomplish that, the bill orders the commission to undertake a study and come up with a formula for line length based on "the voting age population; voter turnout in past elections; the number of voters registered; the number of voters who have registered since the most recent federal election; Census data for the population served by such voting site; the educational levels and socio-economic factors of the population served by such voting site; the needs and numbers of disabled voters and voters with limited English proficiency; [and] the type of voting systems used."

The bill also—in an apparent nod to all those Internet conspiracy buffs who believe that the Diebold Corporation tipped the election to George W. Bush—would make it illegal for a chief executive officer, chief financial officer, chief operating officer, or president of any company that manufactures voting equipment to take part in political activities.

Finally, in what Senator Clinton calls one of the bill's most important provisions, the legislation would require that voting machines produce an "individual voter-verifiable paper record" of each vote.

In the months since the 2004 election, left-wing websites have buzzed with conspiracy theories about Republican manipulation of electronic touch-screen voting machines in Ohio. One Democratic lawsuit (now dropped) suggested that top White House political adviser Karl Rove somehow personally hacked Ohio balloting machines to put President Bush over the top. The proposal would remedy that imagined wrongdoing by requiring touch-screen machines to produce a paper record of each vote. That could be done fairly easily if it were simply an internal printout on a roll of paper, but the bill also requires that the record be "voter verifiable," meaning the voter has to be able to see and approve the record (the bill also specifies what type of paper the receipt could be printed on—quick-fading thermal paper would not be allowed).

How to make a paper record "voter verifiable?" One way would be for the machine to print out a receipt with the voter's name and votes on it. That, of course, would be a gross violation of ballot secrecy and probably lead to an epidemic of vote-selling. So to solve the problem, two of the largest voting-machine makers, Diebold and Sequoia Voting Systems, have designed add-on printers for touch-screen machines, which work this way: The voter touches the names of his chosen candidates displayed on the screen. After he is finished, he presses a button marked "Review." Then the paper receipt—it's on a roll of paper—rolls under a glass screen where the viewer can see it (but not touch it). The voter reviews his votes on the paper record. If it's okay, he presses a button that officially casts the ballot and the receipt is marked final. If there is a problem, he can start the process over again. The original flawed ballot would be marked void.



DARREN GYGI

It's an extremely complex procedure that introduces a number of new chances for machines to malfunction. Most voting-machine experts view this system as far less reliable, and far more expensive, than the paper ballot/optical scan systems in use in many precincts around the country. But for those jurisdictions that have already invested millions of dollars in electronic voting machines, it would probably be the only option if Senator Clinton had her way.

So in the end, the result of all of Senator Clinton's proposed changes—Election Day registration, unlimited provisional voting, no verifiable standards for checking applications, felons' rights, and complex ballot-viewing and -printing procedures—would likely bring a level of chaos to the voting process far beyond anything that existed in 2000 and 2004. And all in the name of reform—and, just possibly, the 2008 presidential campaign of Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Chances are most of it won't ever become law in the Republican-controlled House and Senate. Senator Clinton and her allies surely know that, but they have, in the last few months, spent so much time agitating the Democratic base about those rumored irregularities in Ohio that they needed to offer the true believers a plan of action, even if it fails.

Nevertheless, there will likely be action on *some* sort of election-reform bill before the 2006 elections. Not only are there a few other Democratic proposals, there is also a new bill by Republican senators Mitch McConnell and Christopher Bond. While it proposes to clean up state voter rolls cluttered with ineligible voters, it basically has just one key provision, which is to require photo ID for voters at all polling places. Republicans believe that in the days since 9/11, presenting a photo ID has become a routine part of American life; if you have to show a photo ID to get on an airplane, or to get on a bus, or to buy a pack of cigarettes, is it really so burdensome to show one to vote?

Mrs. Clinton and her allies will oppose such a provision with everything they've got, but if they really want to win those "voter verifiable" paper records, they might have to compromise on the issue of identification. Otherwise, there will probably be nothing left of the "Count Every Vote Act of 2005." **NR**

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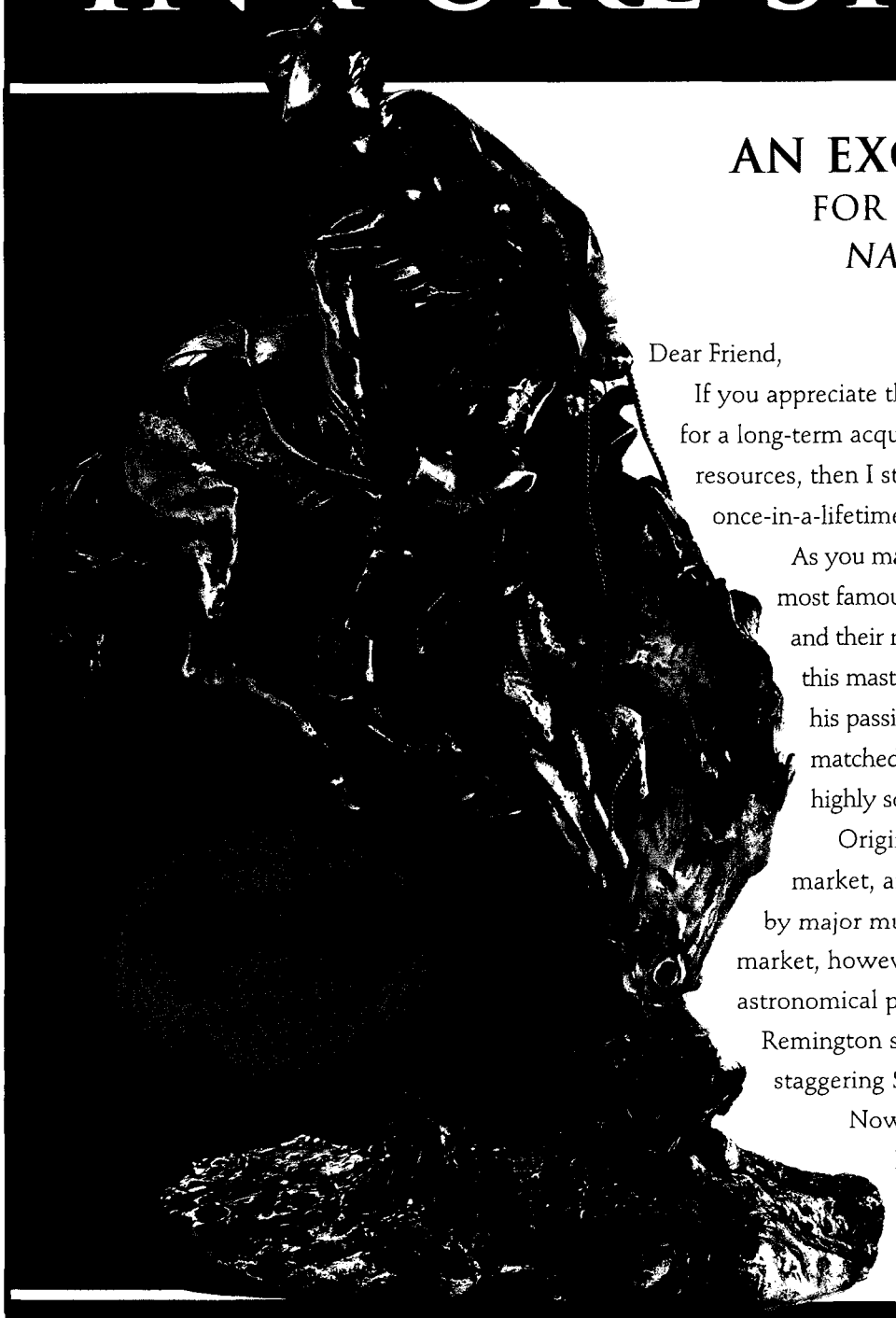

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Original Remington pieces rarely come on the market, and those that do are usually scooped up by major museums and collectors. Once on the market, however, these originals command astronomical prices. In a 1989 Christie's auction, a Remington sculpture brought the hammer down at a staggering $4.4 million.

Now, in an unprecedented move, the Frederic Remington Art Museum has authorized a

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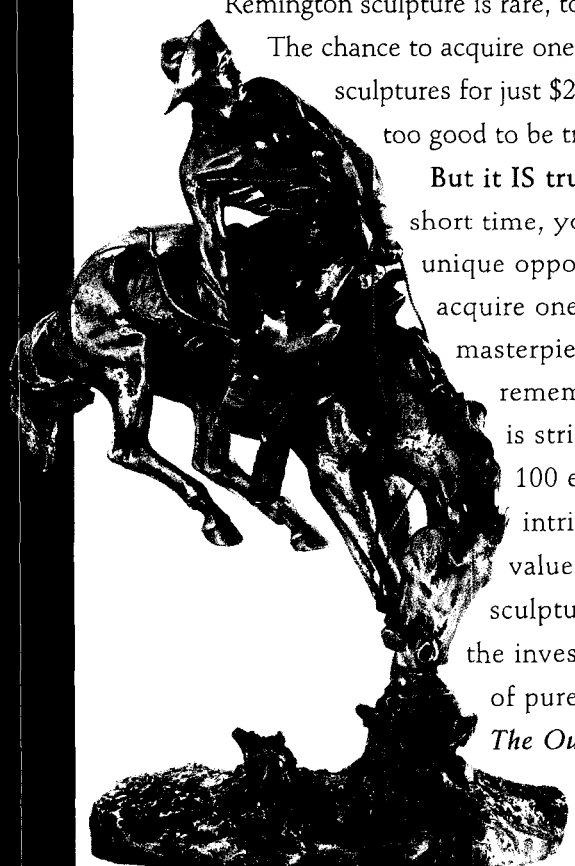
pure-silver recasting of Frederic Remington's *The Outlaw*, one of his most famous and coveted sculptures.

Only 100 of these masterpieces, along with five museum proofs, will ever be cast. Each sculpture will be produced from a mold taken from a Remington original of *The Outlaw*, which is now held in trust at the Museum. And, unlike Remington's original bronze works, these sculptures are cast entirely in precious metal—with each containing more than 1,000 ounces of pure .999 fine silver.

The subject of the cowboy and horse was a central, important theme in Remington's works. Modeled in 1906, *The Outlaw* portrays the cowboy's tenacity and power as his horse thunders earthward on its forelegs. Remington was a master at conveying the complexities of motion. You practically feel the intense movement of the horse and the confident control of the cowboy. In *The Outlaw*, Remington captured the intricate details of both horse and cowboy, right down to the saddle, chaps, and boots.

The opportunity to obtain an officially authorized Remington sculpture is rare, to say the least. The chance to acquire one of these silver sculptures for just $25,000 is almost too good to be true.



But it IS true. For a very short time, you have the unique opportunity to acquire one of these rare masterpieces. But remember, the casting is strictly limited to 100 exemplars. The intrinsic artistic value of the sculpture, coupled with the investment potential of pure silver, makes *The Outlaw* an incredibly desirable asset.

FREDERIC REMINGTON: HIS PRIDE AND PASSION

Frederic Remington was born in upper New York State as the Civil War erupted in 1861. Seth Remington, Frederic's father, was a highly decorated major in the U.S. Cavalry during the Civil War. His dream was to see his son obtain a fine education, and his vision started to become a reality when young Remington entered Yale University as an art student. However, he was not cut out for college life.

Remington was a good horseman and very adventurous. When he turned 19, he left Yale behind and took his first trip to the untamed Montana territory. This was the beginning of Remington's glorification of the West. He wrote and illustrated stories for such popular national magazines as *Collier's* and *Harper's*. He thrilled both young and old with his vivid tales of those tumultuous times.

Remington was an actual eyewitness to the passing of the Old West. One of history's most revered chroniclers of that era, Remington painted, drew and modeled the cowboy, the Native American, and the Cavalry Soldier with an unrivaled authenticity and insight. He worked with a passion seldom equaled by others, struggling to record the historic images that were fleeting before his very eyes. No one did it more accurately or poignantly. He preserved forever the glory and the tragedy of the men who tried to tame the West...and the men who fought to keep it wild.

THE PROFIT POTENTIAL OF PURE SILVER

The decision was made at the inception of the Remington sculpture series to use only .999 fine silver (the purest silver possible). Most silver collectibles are completed in European silver, which starts at 80% pure, or sterling silver which is only 92.5% pure. But each and every silver sculpture in this exclusive edition will be accompanied by an assay report attesting to the fact that only .999 fine, pure silver was used.

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Special Features of The Outlaw: 1,000 troy ounces (70 pounds) of pure .999 fine silver ✦ Actual size is 23.5 inches tall ✦ Certified by the Frederic Remington Art Museum, Ogdensburg, NY, www.fredericremington.org

Many investment advisors encourage their clients to balance their portfolios with a percentage in hard money assets such as silver and gold. This makes acquiring *The Outlaw* an even more attractive investment. You are acquiring a magnificent Frederic Remington sculpture. But its precious metal content of 1,000 ounces of pure silver also provides you with a rare, authentic, hard-money asset with the potential of increasing in value—both because of the silver and because of the art.

AUCTION SALES

Silversmiths Group, USA, our partner in this project, has closely monitored sales of Remington's works for many years. Let's take a look at Remington's impressive record...

Some of Remington's original bronze works have fetched unbelievable prices at auction. The #1 casting of *Coming Through the Rye* was sold at auction for a meager $12,000 in 1958. In 1972, yet another model of the same sculpture sold for $125,000. But listen to this... in May 1989 at a Christie's Auction the same #1 casting of *Coming Through the Rye* sold for a staggering $4.4 million.

An original bronze of *The Wounded Bunkie* sold for $85,000 in 1971; the same work brought $2.9 million in 1993.

In recent years, Silversmiths Group, USA, tested the waters on how well silver sculptures would do at a benefit auction. Museum proofs of previous silver editions were auctioned, specifically *The Broncho Buster*, *The Mountain Man*, and *The Rattlesnake*. Each sculpture commanded more than twice its retail value. *The Broncho Buster* commanded $105,000 in very heated bidding.

One can only imagine what *The Outlaw* in pure silver would bring at the same type of auction.

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However, through our association with the Frederic Remington Art Museum and Silversmiths Group, USA, we have made an exclusive, limited-time arrangement to offer the sculptures to *National Review* subscribers for only $25,000... you save $5,000! Therefore, I urge you to review this material carefully and respond without delay.

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Given how fast these sculptures may sell, I urge you to pick up the phone today and call our toll-free Remington hotline at 1-800-872-2727 to reserve your sculpture.

Let me tell you how the process works. When you call to place your order, you will be assigned a serial number between 1 and 100. (Those wishing to request a specific number in the series should not delay—remember, with the first edition of *The Broncho Buster*, 83 were sold in the first two weeks.) A $2,000 deposit made payable to the Frederic Remington Art Museum is

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required when you place your reservation.

Your deposit money will go directly to the Museum. The mission of the Frederic Remington Art Museum is to collect, exhibit, preserve, and interpret the art and archives of Frederic Remington. The Museum fosters an appreciation for and understanding of the artist by educating its audience in the visual arts and by providing a context for Remington's life in Northern New York.

When your registration number has been issued and your purchase is confirmed by the Museum, you will be contacted for your payment of $13,000 and to schedule the casting of your sculpture.

It will take five to seven weeks from the date we receive your payment to hand-finish your masterpiece. Upon completion, we will contact you for final payment of $10,000 (plus $275 for shipping and insurance). We will then arrange a convenient time to deliver your breathtaking sculpture.

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The Outlaw is both a historic piece of American art and a significant hard-money asset. The fact that each was cast from Remington's original masterpiece and that the edition is strictly limited to only 100 exemplars ensures that each of these superb works is destined to become a genuine classic. Those fortunate enough to acquire one of these sculptures will be richly rewarded both aesthetically and financially.

Sincerely,

Scott F. Budd
Executive Publisher,
National Review

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- Ownership of The Outlaw entitles you to a 25-year membership at the Frederic Remington Art Museum.
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- You will receive *Icons of the West: Frederic Remington's Sculpture* (220 pages). This wonderful reference guide describes each of Remington's 22 bronze sculptures, including comparisons of early and late casts and clues to discerning an original from a reproduction

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■ **BUSINESS**

Blame the Insurance Industry

But not if you know what you're talking about

JOHN E. TAMNY

With President Bush's re-election in November, the medical-liability crisis was brought into sharper view. Bush had campaigned on liability reform, and in a January speech reiterated his belief that malpractice lawsuits "drive up insurance costs for all doctors . . . even for those who have never had a claim against them."

To the insurance companies burdened by the skyrocketing cost of medical-liability jury awards, Bush's stance is presumably a refreshing one. Often the industry is used as a convenient scapegoat, and it has predictably taken hits in the media for its role in the liability mess. Todd A. Smith, president of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA), told the *New York Times* last year that high insurance costs have "everything to do" with greedy insurance companies. But do they?

In Smith's defense, medical-liability costs are undeniably rising. The question is whether they're rising owing to insurance-company greed, or to insurance companies' merely responding to the increasingly bad economics of liability insurance. The growing unwillingness of insurance firms even to underwrite medical-liability insurance suggests something other than greed.

Basic economics tells us that entrepreneurs and companies gravitate toward profitable opportunities, and in doing so bring down costs by offering competition for those profits. We've seen this phenomenon in all business sectors, from long-distance phone rates to computers to VCRs. We've also seen it in the corporate-insurance market—as a *Wall Street Journal* editorial reported last October, "the majority of businesses that are due to renew their policies in January 2005 will see *decreases*" in their premiums.

Competition for profits is working in the corporate-insurance markets, and perhaps unsurprisingly the same kind of competition is having a positive effect on the liability-insurance markets where reforms are occurring: As Mississippi voters began to reject candidates close to the trial bar, and as Mississippi's supreme court started to reject some of the gaudier jury awards, Mass Mutual and other insurers announced their return to the state. According to American Tort Reform Association (ATRA) president Sherman Joyce, medical-liability insurance rates have since stabilized there.

True, liability rates overall continue to rise—but it appears that they're rising because insurance companies are increasingly abandoning liability markets owing to their inability to find profit in them. The American College of Emergency Physicians reports that St. Paul Companies, which has insured 42,000 doctors, 5,800 health-care facilities, and 72,000 health-care providers, has stopped offering medical-liability insurance altogether.

Rather than painting a portrait of rampant greed, the actions of companies like St. Paul suggest that insurance companies are merely making economic decisions, avoiding business lines that are unprofitable. Patients appear to be the ultimate victims here, as doctors are understandably loath to practice without liability insurance. ATRA president Joyce wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* last year that in Illinois's Madison and St. Clair counties "over half [of the] doctors have been sued in the last four years, even though 85 percent of claims result in no payment to the plaintiff." Joyce went on to point out that as lawsuits have increasingly become a growth industry in those counties, hospitals have begun to eliminate high-risk practices such as on-call trauma care. The two counties have also lost 161 physicians.

A 2003 article in the *Tampa Bay Business Journal* reported that seven hospitals in Florida had closed their obstetrics units during that year as a result of insurance concerns. In Orlando alone, the average wait time for women seeking mammography rose from 20 days in 2000 to 150 days in 2002 as numerous radiologists left the business owing to their inability to find or afford insurance. The problems in Illinois and Florida suggest that insurance firms are quite simply unable to put a price on risk in a market badly distorted by frivolous plaintiffs goaded on by unethical trial lawyers.

And medical malpractice is not the only area in which insurance firms appear to have been unjustly demonized. Last fall, New York attorney general Eliot Spitzer kicked up a media storm with his accusations of "bid rigging" and "overcharging" on the part of insurance firms such as Marsh & McLennan in their dealings with corporate clients. Though Spitzer did not offer any explanation of why brutally price-conscious companies like Microsoft would allow themselves to be overcharged, the media were sufficiently intrigued by the concept of rigged markets and turned the story into major news. In an editorial titled "Spitzer Strikes Again," *USA*

Mr. Tammy is a writer based in Washington, D.C.

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Today lauded Spitzer for showing "just how widespread the culture of fraud is in corporate America." What wasn't addressed was how insurance brokers such as Marsh & McLennan had acquired the power to put the squeeze on the Wal-Marts of the world, and were able to trick them into "paying too much for their insurance."

Reasoned analysis suggested that there was an unseen aspect to the story, and one that Spitzer and the mainstream media missed. To begin with, over the last several years corporate risk relating to terrorism and, yes, overzealous regulators and lawmakers has made companies even more vigilant about protecting themselves. The 19th-century economist Frédéric Bastiat regularly wrote of the "seen" and the "unseen." The "seen" in this case was the cost of property/casualty insurance; the "unseen" was how corporations would have had to reduce greatly their investment and risk-taking had insurance firms and brokers not fulfilled their longstanding and valuable role that involves understanding the risks faced by top companies, and creating the best insurance policies for them. *USA Today*'s editorialists pointed to what they saw as abnormally high commissions paid to insurance brokers, but in focusing on cost, might have missed the much greater costs corporations and shareholders would have been forced to take on had they not been properly insured.

Also, those out to besmirch the insurance industry did not factor in what it would cost corporations and shareholders to bring insurance expertise in-house. Even if one were to believe the suspect assertion that corporate premiums were artificially high, it would still have to be explained how Intel or Cisco could assess their insurance needs better and more cheaply than Marsh & McLennan, Aon, or the Willis Group.

Returning to the greed accusations lobbed by ATLA president Smith, it seems that they are at best simplistic. Insurance firms could more realistically be described as impartial risk-management experts eager to offer financial protection for a price in a world of uncertainty. Be it unsafe drivers, hurricanes, unscrupulous board members, or an overzealous trial bar, the insurance industry merely responds to threatening possibilities, and offers policies at premiums commensurate with the risks involved. The large number of firms offering to underwrite the myriad policies available means that customers can "gouge" insurance companies for the best price.

That the industry is avoiding the medical-liability market points not to something sinister on the part of insurance companies, but to something wrong with our legal system. If insurance companies can price terrorism insurance, they can price anything. It's the legal system that needs fixing, not "greedy" insurance companies.

The insurance industry allows individuals and companies to go about their business without the nagging fear that something unforeseen will wipe them out. The dynamic U.S. economy would not be so dynamic if companies could not "outsource" their risk to others.

The U.S.'s dynamic economy would not be so dynamic if companies could not 'outsource' their risk to others.

But the dividends don't end there. It's also fairly easy to assert that insurance makes us safer. Not interested in paying out large claims, insurers will logically avoid insuring both doctors and drivers with bad track records, and instead will gravitate toward those who drive safely and do well by their patients. In markets free of egregious legal distortions, good doctors and drivers will be the rule, while bad ones will be the exception.

Contrary to Todd Smith's assertions, insurance companies are decidedly not the problem in the present medical-liability crisis, nor do they merit the generally low opinion accorded them by politicians and the media. The insurers' presence as profit-seeking entities makes it possible for individuals and companies to exist free of a great deal of worry about the unforeseen. Also, as evidenced by the high claims they're often forced to pay, insurance companies amply fulfill their role as insurers when the inevitable misfortunes arrive. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH II**

Wrong from Head to Toe

A ridiculous and ominous decision in Britain

THEODORE DALRYMPLE

In the long annals of judicial stupidity, there can rarely have been a more idiotic judgment than that recently given by Lord Justice Brooke of the British Court of Appeal. It reads like the suicide note not of a country alone, but of an entire civilization.

A young Muslim girl, Shabina Begum, who attended a state school in Luton, England, four-fifths of whose pupils were Muslim, started a legal battle when she was 13 to be allowed the jilbab, a form of dress that leaves only her face and hands exposed. She was almost certainly put up to this by her older brother, a supporter of Hizb ut-Tahrir, a Muslim party that seeks to establish a Muslim world state, that believes democracy is blasphemy, and that denies that the Western citizenship of Muslims is real or meaningful, or confers any privileges or imposes any duties.

The school in question had, in fact, worked out a dress code for Muslim girls that satisfied almost everyone. It was extremely accommodating: Various forms of modest dress were allowed, including certain types of scarf. But, after two years of accepting the dress code, Shabina Begum suddenly started to appear in her jilbab. The school demanded that she go home and change into a costume that accorded with the dress code, but she refused. Eventually she brought a case, supported and possibly funded by the Hizb ut-Tahrir, under the U.K.'s Human Rights Act. She claimed that the school

Dr. Dalrymple is a contributing editor of *City Journal* and the author of *Life at the Bottom: The Worldview That Makes the Underclass* and of the forthcoming *Our Culture, What's Left of It: The Mandarins and the Masses* (Ivan R. Dee).

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The Holocaust: Sixty Years Later

Is it a solution to the Arab/Israeli conflict or a recipe for disaster?

Sixty years ago, the death camp of Auschwitz was liberated. That cursed place has come to symbolize the horror of the Holocaust. Best estimates are that in Auschwitz-Birkenau alone, over 1.5 million people, most of them Jews from many countries of Europe, were killed and burned. The resolve was "Never Again." But has the spirit of Auschwitz really died?

What are the facts?

Blood libel revisited: In medicine, certain diseases are believed to have been eradicated, but occasionally – decades later – some of them return, often with renewed savagery. The world thought that anti-Semitism, the horrible disease that had unleashed the Holocaust and its six million Jewish victims, had been overcome once and for all. But the virus of hatred that demonized Jews and that herded them to their deaths has revived and is again in full flourish.

> "Those who peddle anti-Semitism under the guise of anti-Israelism . . . better think again. There will be no second Holocaust—NEVER AGAIN!"

Since the Holocaust and since the defeat of the Nazis, it is no longer acceptable openly to proclaim Jew-hatred – except in the Moslem countries. Print and broadcast media in virtually all Moslem countries convey the meanest anti-Semitic propaganda, in the same vein as that of the Nazis. Blood libel, the scandalous slander that Jews use the blood of Christians or Moslems for ritual purposes, mostly to bake their matzot, is circulating freely and widely believed. The Czarist forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* is now a best seller in virtually all Moslem countries. And so is Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.

But in the "civilized" countries of Europe, anti-Semitism is disguised as the socially acceptable enmity toward Israel, the state of the Jews. Over 60 per cent of those polled in Europe assert that Israel is the greatest danger to the peace of the world (barely edging out the United States). The French ambassador to Great Britain referred to Israel as "that sh..ty little country" being the source of all the troubles of the world. Was he disciplined or removed by his government for this obscene outburst? Of course not!

Spirit of genocide: The Auschwitz spirit of 65 years ago that unleashed genocide in Europe did not perish with the Nazis. It is alive and well in many parts of the world, in which Adolf Hitler is still a hero. By now, most European nations – prominently France, Belgium, the Netherlands, but also Britain, Germany and the Scandinavian countries – have substantial Moslem populations. The goal of virtually all of them is the destruction of Israel. In that, they find a receptive audience in much of the European public, a public whose grandfathers were the perpetrator generation that killed six million Jews.

Can the barely disguised enmity toward Israel be explained by anything other than anti-Semitism? There are the crocodile tears over the alleged "occupation of Arab land" by the Israelis, the alleged mistreatment of the Arabs by the "brutal Israeli occupiers," the "cycle of violence," and the building of a fence to defend against marauding suicide bombers. But all that is hypocrisy, of course, a pretext to rationalize anti-Semitism.

The Europeans don't care about the more than a million blacks who were killed and continue to be killed in the Congo, the hundreds of thousands that were killed in Uganda and in Rwanda, the over two million farmers who were driven off their land in Darfur province in Sudan, and the hundred thousand killed by their Arab fellow citizens. No, it's only Israel that captures the attention of the world and of the United Nations, in which the vast majority of its Resolutions deal with the purported misdeeds of Israel.

Most of the world stands by as the Moslems, already armed to the teeth with the most advanced weapons, feverishly pursue the holy grail of nuclear armaments. Those weapons – freely conceded (at least in the case of Iran) have one purpose only, namely the destruction of Israel. The nations of Europe stand by, some of them secretly hoping perhaps that Israel, that sh..ty little country, will indeed be wiped from the face of the earth. Having committed the first Holocaust, or at least having stood by mostly approvingly, they now countenance with equanimity a second Holocaust, just as long as somebody else does the dirty work.

Israel is aware that its days would be numbered if any of its mortal enemies were to acquire nuclear weapons. Two or three such weapons, placed on the narrow coastal corridor of the country, would be the end of the Jewish state. But Israel will not allow that to happen. It is not going to sacrifice itself on the altar of world opinion. If Iran isn't stopped from acquiring nuclear weapons, there can be little question that, with or without the approval of the United States, Israel would have to preempt and, just as it destroyed the Osirak nuclear plant of Iraq in 1981, would destroy the Iranian nuclear installations – by whatever means it might take. This could quickly escalate to engulf and bring destruction to much of the Middle East. Those who peddle anti-Semitism under the guise of anti-Israelism and those who advocate to dismember Israel and fatally weaken it so as to make it defenseless, better think again. There will be no second Holocaust—NEVER AGAIN!

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
Gerardo Joffe, President

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501 (c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

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was denying her right to an education.

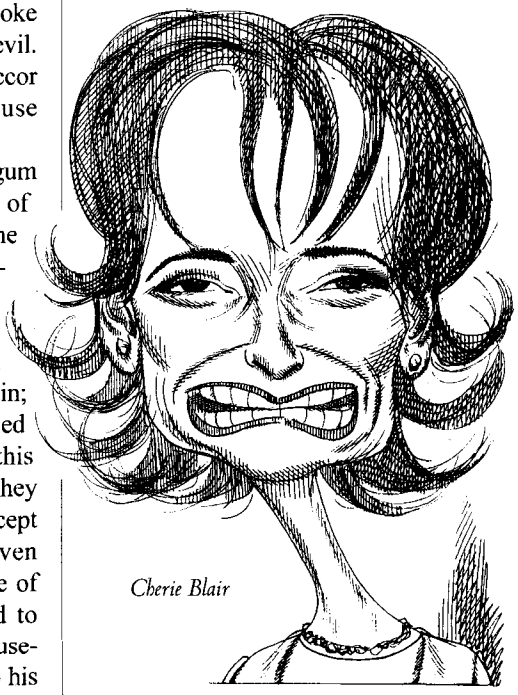
She lost the case, and also an appeal, but won at the last hurdle. The *Guardian* reported that after her victory, she said she "could scream with happiness."

When they heard of her victory, many Muslim women around the country must have wanted to scream with quite different emotions, despair and rage prominent among them. For Lord Justice Brooke's ruling, that Shabina Begum's human rights had been denied, and that she had been discriminated against illegally on religious grounds, displayed a complete and invincible ignorance of the social context of the case. Lord Justice Brooke saw no evil, heard no evil, and felt no evil. In effect, therefore, he was giving succor to those Muslim men who still abuse women in a medieval fashion.

Regardless of whether Shabina Begum acted in this case without duress and of her own free will, which seems to me highly unlikely given that the traditional place of Muslim women is not the public spotlight, the fact is that substantial numbers of young Muslim women are virtually enslaved in Britain; they grow up in what can only be called a totalitarian environment. I know this from what my patients have told me. They are not allowed out of the house except under escort, and sometimes not even then; they are allowed no mail or use of the telephone; they are not allowed to contradict a male member of the household, and are automatically subject to his wishes; it is regarded as quite legitimate to beat them if they disobey in the slightest. Their brothers are often quite willing to attack anyone who speaks to the women in any informal context. They are forced to wear modes of dress that they do not wish to wear. Their schooling is quite often deliberately interrupted, so that they are not infected by Western ideas of personal liberty; ambitious for a career, they are kept at home as prisoners and domestic slaves.

Worst of all are the forced marriages to which they are subjected. They are taken by their parents, often at a young age, "back" to Pakistan, where they are told that they are getting married, often to a first cousin. Their fathers regard their British passports with all the respect Hitler accorded to treaties. The young women have possession of their passports only fleetingly, as they pass through immigration. Thereafter, they are confiscated by the father and held as ransom against their good behavior, which in this, as in every other, instance means doing as they are told.

If by any chance they should object to their marriage, they are mercilessly beaten and in some cases killed. All the young women who are taken to Pakistan are aware of such cases: Like the shooting of Admiral Byng, such cases are committed *pour encourager les autres*. Very occasionally, the parents do not



Cherie Blair

ROMAN GENN

even transport the recalcitrant girls to Pakistan to kill them: They do it in England. Recently in the prison in which I work, I met a young man of Pakistani origin who was afraid of the other young men of Pakistani origin in the prison. Why? Because he had previously given important evidence in court in a case in which a girl who had refused to marry the husband selected for her by her parents was murdered by her father and brothers. The other young men of Pakistani origin thought the man who had testified was a traitor to their religion and culture; for in fact it is a religion and culture very convenient to the young men, whom it supplies with a domestic slave and mother of children while they can entertain themselves elsewhere. The whole evil system would break down if any of the young women were allowed their freedom, which is why the men must stick together. Like any form of totalitarianism, it is strong but brittle.

I have spoken to Muslims about this, and they tell me that what I am describing is customary or cultural practice, not a religious requirement. I am not scholar enough to know whether they are right, but it is certainly customary practice over a large area of the earth's surface. And so long as this practice, be it religious or customary, is widespread, the word of no Muslim girl who claims to want to wear increasingly "modest" dress can be taken at her word, any more than a public figure in the USSR could have been taken as expressing his own personal opinion. If the judge was aware of this, he took no notice of it.

The Muslim Council of Britain welcomed the judge's ruling as a victory for religious freedom (of precisely the kind that the Hizb ut-Tahrir is dedicated to destroying). Yet at other times, in order to deflect criticism that Muslim modes of dress are inherently degrading, insofar as they imply that all women are nothing but temptresses and men nothing but psychopaths at the mercy of their concupiscence, it would argue that extreme covering of the body is not religiously required—in other words, that the wearing of the jilbab (as against other forms of modest dress) is actually a matter of religious indifference. One is strongly reminded of Communist tactics: to denigrate and take advantage of freedom at the same time. And having seen that British society is so weak and unwilling to defend itself against an alien culture, the fanatics will next demand that girls at school be allowed on the grounds of religious freedom to cover themselves up even more.

The obvious point is this: No expressed desire by a child or young woman to wear traditional clothing such as the jilbab can be taken as arising from free choice—even if, in any given instance, it is the result of such a choice—because of the oppressive nature of the subculture. It is precisely this point that an Iranian woman, Chahdortt Djavann, an anthropologist now living in France, made in her short book about the meaning of the veil in Islam, *Bas les voiles!* She wrote not only from a theoretical or abstract point of view: She had lived the experience.

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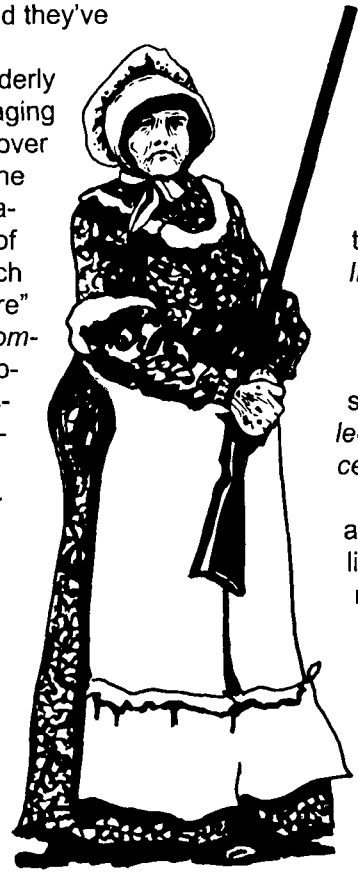
The Old Battle-Axes of Liberal Catholicism Want to *Blow Us Away*

For years, traditional Catholicism has been ascendant, and now it's *the* dynamic force in the U.S. Catholic Church. Not surprisingly, greying liberal Catholics have been getting uptight and ticked off, and they've been lashing out.

For example, *Commonweal*, that elderly organ of liberal Catholicism with an aging readership, devoted its entire back cover to an attempt to ridicule us. We are the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, a Catholic magazine of a newer generation. The gist of their attack was that we're out of touch with "liberal post-Enlightenment culture" and are read by "ostriches." Earlier, *Commonweal* printed a letter from a homosexual claiming that we "reek of fascism." Ah, that good ol' "F" word, so serviceable in the salad days of the 60s!



The *National Catholic Reporter*, always on the cutting edge of 60s nostalgia, has nonjudgmentally accused us of taking "cheap shots" at feminism and being a "poisoned dart," while letter writers have sensitively demonized us as "triumphalistic," "abusive," and "vicious."

We placed a satirical ad in *America*, the liberal Jesuit weekly, headlined "Does St. Bozo's Parish No Longer Amuse You?" Three weeks later, *America* printed a letter accusing us of being "very callous" and favoring "thought-control." In reply, *America* offered its "sincerest apologies" to its humor-impaired reader for running our ad, and solemnly affirmed that our ad was "offensive," the Great Sacrilege of the Politically Correct. And, striking a mighty blow against "thought-control," *America* banned *all* our "offensive" ads. Ah, you didn't know that the liberal Jesuits maintain an *Index of Forbidden Ads*, did you?

Archbishop Rembert Weakland, who paid out $450,000 in Archdiocesan funds to cover up a homosexual affair, has called us "extremely offensive." Well, we hope so, especially to the likes of *him*.

And the liberals at the Catholic Library Association have recently banned us from their *Catholic Periodical and Literature Index* — without explanation.

Of course, all of this is so typical of liberal Catholics. They're all for inclusiveness, but love to *exclude* the non-inclusive; they're all for diversity, but not *intellectual* diversity. And oh, how they love to *censor* speech that "offends" them.

Actually, we're delighted to be attacked and banned by the wheezing warriors of liberal Catholicism. "Banned in Boston" — notoriety is great box office.

Why are we so detested? Because we energetically support traditional Catholicism and a strong papacy. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, we're "influential." Obviously, we're *too* influential to ignore — or to tolerate.

Among those who've written for us are Walker Percy, James Hitchcock, Alice von Hildebrand, Michael S. Rose, Fr. Peter Stravinskas, and Tom Bethell.

We've got "attitude," says Karl Keating; "heartily recommended," says *The Wanderer*; "first-rate," says *National Review*. Find out what the fireworks are about by subscribing to our incandescent monthly magazine! After all, you don't want to be an *ostrich*, do you?

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A singular feature of Shabina Begum's case was the name of the advocate acting on her behalf: none other than Mrs. Tony Blair. She obviously thought the case a very important one, for she goes into court relatively rarely these days, having so many other things to do. Could the preservation, indeed encouragement, of the culture I have described matter so very much to Cherie Blair, then, and if so, why? Why would the prime minister's wife act for a young woman known to be supported by Muslim fundamentalists?

Two days before the judgment was announced, a would-be shoe bomber pled guilty in England; he was described as "a quiet boy who took his religious beliefs very seriously." And a junior minister in the government, Hazel Blears, said that Muslims might have been stopped and searched by police more often than other people because some terrorists were "falsely hiding behind Islam," and that Muslims should understand this. These remarks were hardly calculated to endear the government to Muslim voters, and there is an election coming up. However tactfully Blears tried to express herself, to most Muslim ears it must have sounded as if the government were once again accusing them all of being terrorists, or at least of supporting terrorism. Unfortunately for the government, there are substantial numbers of Muslim voters, some in constituencies the government is not certain of winning.

How was the Blair government to reconcile two apparently opposite needs: the need to appear to be dealing with Muslim terrorism in a determined, vigorous, and efficient way, and the need to capture Muslim votes?

The answer was simple and elegant: get the prime minister's wife to defend the Muslim male's practice of abusing women, though of course in the guise acceptable to liberal voters of defending the human rights of the women themselves. The circle was squared. In other words, there has been a quid pro quo for all the extra police surveillance of Muslims that they are bound to find irksome and humiliating. Allow us to suspect and search you, says the government, and we in turn will allow you to abuse your women to your hearts' content, free of our interference. The price of our reelection is forced marriages. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH III**

Honest Injun?

The incidence of fake Indians is almost epidemic

JOHN J. MILLER

In his book *The Education of Little Tree*, Forrest Carter tells the tender tale of becoming an orphan and growing up in the Appalachian boondocks under the careful watch of his Cherokee grandparents. The book is full of sweet lessons about the importance of family and the need to live in harmony with nature. There's quite a backstory to it as well. First published in 1976, *The Education of Little Tree* received warm reviews and garnered a cult following, but wasn't a commercial hit. Ten years later, the University of New Mexico Press bought the rights to it for just $500.

That purchase ranks as one of the publishing industry's most lucrative coups: *The Education of Little Tree* has since sold hundreds of thousands of copies. "The values as well as the prose touched many who didn't usually read," wrote Prof. Rennard Strickland in a foreword to the original paperback edition. "Students of Native American life discovered the book to be as accurate as it was mystical and romantic." On June 23, 1991, the book debuted on the *New York Times* bestseller list for paperback nonfiction. It remained there throughout the summer and well into the fall, eventually rising to the top position. Then, on November 10, it vanished—and reappeared on the bestseller list for paperback *fiction*.

That's because it had been exposed as a fraud. Forrest Carter was really Asa Carter, a white supremacist who had written speeches for Alabama governor George Wallace in the 1960s. Wallace's viciously memorable line—"Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!"—probably came from Carter's pen. Carter, who died in 1979, was a forerunner to such fabulists as Stephen Glass and Jayson Blair. He was no Indian and his famous book was no memoir.

Carter was one of the more spectacular examples of a white person trying to come off as an Indian. There is a long history of this make-believe behavior, going back at least as far as the Boston Tea Party. The 19th and 20th centuries saw the emergence of fraternal orders and other organizations that aped Indian identities. Yet nobody seriously believed the Campfire Girls were the authentic daughters of Sitting Bull. That's not the case with some of the most recent forms of real Indian bull, as Carter and *The Education of Little Tree* demonstrate. "It's an epidemic," complains Vernon Bellecourt of the American Indian Movement. "These people are culture vultures, and their motive is to make money."

Between 1960 and 2000, the number of Americans claiming Indian ancestry on their census forms jumped by a factor of six. Neither birthrates nor counting methodologies can account for this explosive growth. Instead, the phenomenon arises in large part from the increasingly idealistic place Indians occupy in the popular imagination. Much of it is based on harmless sentiment mixed into a hash of unverifiable family legends and wishful thinking among folks who hang dreamcatchers from their rearview mirrors. But for a distinct subset, it's all about personal profit. They're professional imposters who have built entire careers by putting the sham into shaman.

The most famous of these pretenders is probably Iron Eyes Cody, the actor who starred in those Keep America Beautiful television ads during the 1970s. It turns out that the tear—actually glycerin—trickling down his sad face wasn't his only deception. Iron Eyes Cody was born Espera DeCorti, the son of Italian immigrants. His black hair and bronze skin apparently came from his mother's Sicilian side. Although many Indians who met him harbored doubts about his true identity, Iron Eyes turned his trickery into a successful career in Hollywood. He performed as an Indian in more than a hundred films, all the while insisting that his father was Cherokee and his mother Cree. His published auto-

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Thirty Attorneys General Speak Out On Pain Management!

To: The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
From: The National Association of Attorneys General

January 19, 2005

We, the undersigned Attorneys General, write to express our concern about recent DEA actions with respect to prescription pain medication policy and to request a joint meeting with you...

The National Association of Attorneys General in 2003 adopted a Resolution Calling for a Balanced Approach to Promoting Pain Relief and Preventing Abuse of Pain Medications. Both these documents reflected a consensus among law enforcement agencies, health care practitioners, and patient advocates that the prevention of drug abuse is an important societal goal that can and should be pursued without hindering proper patient care. The [DEA Pain Guidelines] issued in 2004 appeared to be consistent with these principles, so we were surprised when they were withdrawn. The Interim Policy published on November 16, 2004 emphasizes enforcement, and seems likely to have a chilling effect on physicians engaged in the legitimate practice of medicine...

We have learned that adequate pain management is often difficult to obtain because many physicians fear investigations and enforcement actions if they prescribe adequate levels of opioids or have many patients with prescriptions for pain medications. We are working to address these concerns while ensuring that individuals who do divert or abuse drugs are prosecuted...

We hope that together we can find ways to prevent abuse and diversion without infringing on the legitimate practice of medicine or exerting a chilling effect on the willingness of physicians to treat patients who are in pain...We hope to meet with you soon.

Sincerely,

Attorneys General of:

Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia

www.CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org, www.DrugWarFacts.org

Mike Gray, Chair; Robert Field, Co-Chair

See the full letter at www.csdp.org/naagletter.htm

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biography is a pack of lies. The full truth came out only after his death in 1999.

The latest phony Indian to be unmasked is Ward Churchill, the University of Colorado professor who recently ruffled feathers for calling the victims of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center "little Eichmanns" whose massacre was a "penalty befitting their participation in" global capitalism. Churchill is an all-too-predictable product of the modern academy. He is a tenured "ethnic studies" specialist, but he does not hold a doctorate in anything, and his scholarship, if it can be called that, is riddled with errors and left-wing posturing. The man is a buffoon.

Churchill can get away with so few credentials and such a heap of sloppiness because he claims to speak on behalf of a disenfranchised minority. The basis for this assertion rests on Churchill's ancestry, which he has variously described as three-sixteenths Cherokee and one-sixteenth Cree. Yet he has never provided any documentary evidence on his background, which Indians commonly do to prove their status within a tribe. He did gain membership to the Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in 1994, but it was an associate membership that was temporarily available to people who aren't in fact Indian. (Bill Clinton, who has said that his grandmother's grandmother was a Cherokee, is also an honorary member of the Keetoowah.)

"You can spot these phony baloneys across the continent," says Suzan Shown Harjo, a Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogee who first met Churchill about 15 years ago. "Right away, I could tell he was a faker because he refused to talk about his family."

Churchill served in Vietnam—he has boasted about going on dangerous jungle missions, but Army records indicate that he mostly drove trucks—and at the time he listed himself as "Caucasian." He switched this to "American Indian" in 1978, when he filled out an affirmative-action form as part of his application to become a lecturer in Native American studies at Colorado. He has maintained this identity ever since, though the only corroboration he can offer—apart from his obvious fondness for the long-hair-and-dark-sunglasses look of a reservation activist—is his own word.

A less extravagant but more common fraud than masquerading as an "ethnic studies" expert involves the marketing of non-Indian arts and crafts as "Indian-made." The problem became so pervasive that Congress toughened truth-in-advertising laws against it in 1990. Businesses caught violating the Indian Arts and Crafts Act face penalties up to $1 million. That's peanuts to the gambling industry, of course, and the fast growth of tribal casinos has prompted many Americans to embark on genealogical hunting expeditions. The enormous Foxwoods casino in Connecticut, for example, was built by a small band of people who didn't normally refer to themselves as Pequot Indians until they realized a tribal identity was their ticket to gambling riches.

For others, Indian ancestry is a gateway to government set-aside programs. A public-works contractor in California managed to qualify as a disadvantaged businessman because a great-great-grandparent's contribution to the family gene pool had made him 1/64th Indian.

One of the most common forms of exploitation involves white writers who don't pretend to be Indians themselves but who claim special insights into Indian spirituality. In 1968, Carlos Castaneda, a UCLA graduate student in anthropology, published *The Teachings of Don Juan*, which was allegedly based on his clandestine visits with a reclusive Yaqui sorcerer in the Sonoran desert. The book purports to describe the mystical secrets of an ancient Indian faith, which happened to involve using a lot of hallucinogenic drugs. Castaneda's ramblings were in tune with the turn-on, drop-out times. His book became an international bestseller. Castaneda spent the next three decades refusing interviews and issuing sequels based on his supposed encounters with a man nobody else ever met. He died in 1998.

Another bestselling author, Lynn Andrews, has been dubbed "the female Carlos Castaneda," and it wasn't meant as an insult. Her first book, *Medicine Woman*, described a journey into the far reaches of Manitoba, where she met a pair of female sages. Then she returned home to Beverly Hills and has spent the rest of her life peddling New Age gobbledygook in subsequent books, through online courses, and at Hawaiian retreats. She is just a small part of a cottage industry that offers sweat-lodge "purification ceremonies" and tour-guided "rites of passage" in the wilderness. In 1993, the National Congress of American Indians became so frustrated by all these perversions of authentic religious traditions that it issued a "declaration of war" against "non-Indian 'wanna-bes,' hucksters, cultists, commercial profiteers, and self-styled New Age shamans."

Nobody likes a con artist, and it isn't difficult to find harsh critics of white people who "play Indian" for personal gain. One of their most scathing detractors has labeled Castaneda "the greatest hoax since Piltdown Man," called Andrews "an air-head 'feminist' yuppie," and branded Ruth Beebe Hill's *Hanta Yo*—yet another book of doubtful legitimacy—a "ludicrous performance." Taken together, these charlatans have "made a significant recent contribution (for profit) to the misrepresentation and appropriation of indigenous spirituality." What's more, they've "been tendered some measure of credibility by the 'certified scholars' of American universities."

But that's not all. By impersonating Indians and making them look like fools, these imposters are guilty of "cultural genocide."

That would seem to make them little Eichmanns, too. The author of these words? Ward Churchill. **NR**

ROMAN GENN

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■ COVER ESSAY

A Democratic Momentum

Bush and his allies have done important things; the clerics in Iran cast a shadow

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

In one significant speech after another, President Bush stresses that he is on the side of democratic reformers, that he supports "democratic transitions in practical ways," and that the cornerstone of his second-term foreign policy is to promote democracy, "particularly in the Arab world." The concept is simplicity itself—too simple according to Western critics, but not to Arabs. In a tone of wonder, the leftist German magazine *Der Spiegel* spoke for flabbergasted onlookers with the question posed by its recent cover story: "Could George W. Bush Be Right?" Yes, he could: He is advancing freedom. Relapses are always possible, of course, but suddenly today's Arab order is shaking with unprecedented hope.

Anyone with experience of the Arab Middle East will have found a civilization that does not know what to do with itself. Freedom and democracy have been unknown quantities. The manners and grace of the past are almost irrecoverable. Creativity is blocked in all spheres by despotisms grinding down everything. One after another, ambitious and ruthless men have seized power and held it on the principle that force is the only law. Most of them have been soldiers, though a few have been monarchs claiming a right to rule through their Islamic affiliations. The coups, wars, and civil wars of these absolute rulers have left innumerable victims. The human waste is tragic. Worse still, the strong oppress the weak and degrade society in a way that cannot be stopped from within, and so would repeat itself forever.

The model of the strong ruler is Gamal Abdul Nasser, far and away the most influential Arab of the 20th century. He had the chance to turn an independent Egypt into a modern nation-state. Instead, he believed that greater strength would come from Arab nationalism. The Arabs are not one people, however, and Arab nationalism set them at each other's throats rather than uniting them. Nasser compounded his mistake by throwing his lot in with the Soviet Union. Rulers in Syria and Iraq and Libya followed the lead. So did Yasser Arafat. Together they condemned the Middle East to be a bloody arena of the Cold War, and what should have been independent nation-states instead turned into slummy and sovietized dictatorships.

The strength of these dictatorships was more apparent than real, actually a façade behind which the military and secret police were carrying out the dirty work. How strong could any Arab ruler be if the Soviets and the Americans (never mind the Israelis) were stronger? Realization of weakness has led to pervasive self-pity. Arabs tend to absolve themselves of their failures, blaming them instead on the various Westerners, imperialists, Zionists, infidels, who are so unfairly strong. And out of the painful but unexamined sense of failure has grown Islamism, a religious version of Arab nationalism, positing that Arabs are one people united by their faith, and therefore in no need of nation-states. Fueling Islamism is that same pervasive sense of self-pity that converts into aggression.

Democratization and the creation of valid nation-states is the only alternative to Arab nationalism and Islamism alike. Democratization will allow Arabs in each of their countries to take their destiny into their own hands, at last in a position to jettison self-pity and the aggression that springs out of it, and able to meet Americans, Israelis, and everyone else on equal terms. September 11 is the unlikely trigger for democratization, but such is the cunning of history.

THE ISLAMIST CHALLENGE

That attack was the moment when the ideology of Islamism superseded an Arab nationalism that was evidently no longer serviceable either as a tool for mobilizing Arabs or for rivaling the West. Islamism had been gathering strength since Ayatollah

Mr. Pryce-Jones, an NR senior editor, is the author of *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs*, and over 20 other books.

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Khomeini seized power in Iran in classic style, and installed his version of a police state. One way or another, Islamist Iran challenged Arabs to emulate it, and Saudi Arabia—and Osama bin Laden in particular—took up the challenge.

Islamism is capable of degrading the Arab world still further, while also taking the West down with it in a way that Arab nationalism could not. Critics like to maintain that Islamism is in the mind, and therefore can only be fought at the intellectual level. On the contrary, the campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan has shown the positive results of occupying territory. The successful democratization of an Arab state would refute the pretensions of Islamist ideology, and Iraq is the obvious—perhaps the only—country in which to launch such a process. It has all the resources necessary to become a modern nation-state. Furthermore, the Iraqi Shiites and the (non-Arab) Kurds are not Arab nationalists, nor are they Islamists after the Iranian fashion.

Among other immediate benefits, the invasion of Iraq marks the delayed lifting from the Middle East of the Cold War and its consequences. Saddam Hussein was not a Soviet client, to be sure, but he was a faithful pupil of Nasser's and of Stalin's. In that role, he sponsored Arafat and the Palestinian intifada. The Israeli-Palestinian struggle is a Cold War relic if ever there was one, and the timely removal of both Saddam and Arafat opens a prospect of negotiations free from the previous considerations of maximizing power in the region. The Palestinians themselves are talking about "a real change on the ground."

Throughout the Middle East, one-man rulers suddenly appear for what they are, fantasists at best, illegitimate tyrants at worst.

Furthermore, Saddam promoted and justified himself as the very prototype of the Arab strongman. His swift overthrow exposes the fundamental structural weakness of absolutism. Throughout the Middle East, one-man rulers, whether monarchs or presidents, suddenly appear for what they are, fantasists at best, illegitimate tyrants at worst.

And finally the altogether exceptional elections in Iraq have shown that people can begin to take their destiny into their own hands, and so create a nation-state and the freedom that goes with it. In the words of Kanan Makiya, the Iraqi intellectual who has been preeminent in advocating constitutionalism, the Iraqi voters have set the pace because for the first time in any Arab country they have "placed claims on those who will lead them in the future."

The example proves contagious. The murder of Rafik Hariri, the former prime minister of Lebanon, was an act of old-style Arab nationalism, perpetrated by someone with the Syrian secret police behind him, maybe President Bashar Assad himself. In former times, this killing would have been shrugged off as the kind of bloody deed characteristic of the region's politics, and about which nothing could be done, and for which nobody could be brought to account. Hafiz, Bashar's father and predecessor as president, did not hesitate to murder politicians and journalists, including two Lebanese presidents; Kamal Jumblatt, the Druze chieftain; Christian leaders such as Dany Chamoun; and a Sunni chief mufti. Revolted by Hariri's death but inspired by events in Iraq, the Lebanese are taking to the streets in their tens of thousands for the so-called Cedar Revolution. Although variously Sunni and Shiite, Druze and Christian, the demonstrators are united in demanding a nation-state of their own, and the freedom this means.

Walid Jumblatt, leader of the Druze and son of the murdered Kamal, has hitherto taken care to appease Syria. A memorable statement of his shows how far and fast the wind is now blowing: "It's strange for me to say it, but this process of change has started because of the American invasion of Iraq. I was cynical about Iraq. But when I saw the Iraqi people voting three weeks ago, 8 million of them, it was the start of a new Arab world." Chibli Mallat, a professor of international law in Beirut and one of the most respected Arab intellectuals, describes events there as a genuine novelty, "an attempt to bring about regime change through non-violent means."

Compare and contrast the retreat from absolutism under way in the Middle East with the implosion of the Soviet bloc during the late 1980s. In both instances, elections brought an end to monopolies of power. The moment Mikhail Gorbachev allowed Boris Yeltsin to run for office against him, he collapsed his own power base. In Egypt, President Hosni Mubarak has been the sole candidate in four presidential elections. For over twenty years he has ruled by emergency decree, and has never hesitated to use whatever degree of force he has judged necessary to support his power. Muslim extremists and terrorists have been killed or captured and then executed in their thousands. Men of the stature of Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Ayman Nur have been harried and imprisoned for attempting to introduce basic democratic procedures. He seemed to be grooming his son Gamal as successor. Suddenly he is conceding that rival candidates, even Ibrahim and Nur, may stand against him in presidential elections later this year. True, Mubarak receives a $2 billion annual subsidy from Washington, but Bush's insistence on freedom is evidently forcing first steps in democratization on him.

In Syria, the constitution was rigged so that Bashar Assad could succeed his father as president, and he has ruled by emergency decree for almost five years. The Cedar Revolution is suddenly demanding that this regime confront its cruelty and corruption. The resources of Syria and occupied Lebanon are in the hands of the Assad family and cronies. Nobody knows the exact tally of Syrian and Lebanese victims. Farid Ghadry, a leading Syrian reformer and an exile, claims that as many as 17,000 people have disappeared. The Syrian prison of Sednaya alone contains more than 600 political prisoners. Aktham Naisse, another courageous intellectual, presented a petition signed by 7,000 Syrians asking for the lifting of rule by emergency decree. Arrested, then released

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and arrested again, he faces trial. Absolute rulers in Bashar's predicament make an example of protesters by opening fire on them. Secret policemen recently killed some dozens of Kurdish and other dissidents in Syria, but the scale of the Cedar Revolution precludes a mass atrocity. Pressure from the White House has obliged Bashar to promise to evacuate Syrian troops and secret police from Lebanon. Under this pressure, he complains that he expects an American invasion one day. Put another way, he recognizes superior force when he sees it.

WHAT FORCE CAN DO

Is the use of force to break absolutism justified, or is this, as the Left likes to charge, colonialism in contemporary guise? That is the accusation the British once faced as they put down slavery and piracy, and eliminated customs such as the burning of widows in India, seeing no reason to apologize for acts of common humanity. Colonialism is a process full of ambiguity and complexity, springing from some initial inequality between colonizer and colonized. What then evolves with an inflexibility that seems to amount almost to a law of history is that the colonized acquires from the colonizer those ideas and institutions that lead to independence and newfound equality between the parties.

The Iraqi elections, the Cedar Revolution, Mubarak's concessions, are so many preliminaries toward a more equal relationship between the West and the Arab order. (On a lesser scale, Israel has illustrated the same point by deploying superior force to break Yasser Arafat's intifada, thereby opening the way to a more equal relationship with Palestinians.) Those threatened with loss of power and dispossession of course may try to recover by mobilizing yet more force, or turning to the black arts of deception and lying.

Perhaps Mubarak will somehow manipulate his coming presidential election, for the fifth time arranging a cosmetic vote of more than 90 percent. Perhaps Syrian military and secret police units will leave Lebanon publicly through one door, only to slink back surreptitiously in civilian clothes through another. Moammar Ghaddafi has given a fine example of the sort of double-standard conduct to be expected: Currying favor with the United States by giving up his weapons of mass destruction, he has made sure that Fathi al-Jahmi, a Libyan democrat and dissident, has vanished without a trace into some prison. Under direct military compulsion to accept loss of power for himself, and freedom for others, Osama bin Laden utters regular long-distance curses. In the same mode, his colleague Abu Musab al-Zarqawi threatens on behalf of the Sunnis of Iraq, "We have declared a bitter war against the principle of democracy and all those who seek to enact it." The inequality of the relationship they offer could hardly be clearer.

Deception is the time-honored strategy of poor-little-rich Saudi Arabia. Amid much trumpeting, the country has just held municipal elections, bogus because half the seats were allocated by the royal family; women, of course, were denied the vote. At the same time, in the first seven weeks of this year, there have been twenty public beheadings. Intellectuals presenting a petition for democratic change have been arrested. Nobody knows how many of the Saudi Shiites are in prison, or what then happens to them. Dr. Saleh al-Khatham, a Saudi human-rights advocate, says that a third of those arrested are held in prison without trial for over a year. The royal regime will no doubt continue to sponsor terror while pretending to be its victim, and the general helplessness has been recently summed up by Prince Saud al-Faisal, one of the royals who are also ministers, when he said, "We know we want to reform, we know we want to modernize, but for God's sake leave us alone."

In grim contrast, the clerics ruling Iran are among the last rulers anywhere in the world with the determination to shoot as many opponents and reformers as they have to on the day that they meet a serious challenge to their absolutism. They are well aware what a mess they have made of government; they swell with the usual self-pity that expresses itself as aggression. Blaming their faults on the United States, they see themselves waging undeclared war against the Great Satan of their imagination. Again nobody really knows the scale of the daily injustices the population suffers, but the victims of judicial executions and arbitrary imprisonment are in the tens of thousands. Huge numbers of Iranians—almost certainly the majority—are in a state of proto-rebellion and look to the United States to liberate them.

The dark shadow of these clerics falls over their Arab neighbors, and it may have the power to scupper current hopes, and check democratization at least for the time being. The Iraqi elections were a setback for them, true. But Syria is their proxy, and it has proxies in turn, Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Hezbollah is the largest and best-organized militia in Lebanon, capable both of frustrating American interests through terror and of disrupting Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. Commanding Hezbollah in Lebanon, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah is already calling for mass rallies to support Syria and so perpetuate the old Arab order whereby the strong do what they like to the weak. He warns, "This is a year of devotion to resistance." Another year or two is all the mullahs need to acquire the nuclear weapon, which is their version of an equal relationship with the United States. Should they succeed, another much more unstable Cold War will settle on the Middle East. **NR**

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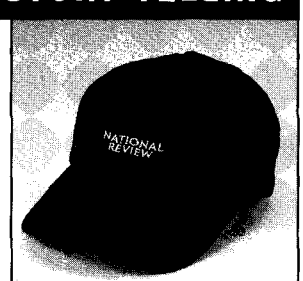

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■ COVER ESSAY II

The Naysayers

Today's variety sound wearyingly familiar

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

For nearly three years we have witnessed a steady stream of invective that American policy in the Middle East is amoral, impractical, or doomed to failure. The recent democratic aftershocks in Lebanon, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, which followed from the elections in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Palestinian territories, have sent formerly critical pundits and diplomats scrambling for cover. As interesting as the about-faces of the *New York Times* et al. are, we should not forget that the domestic criticism of American efforts has long roots in our past, but little to do with the historic developments on the ground in Iraq.

Take, for example, the blame-America-first line. Some on the hard left sought to blame September 11 on our support for Israel or general "American imperialism" in the Middle East. Past American efforts to save Muslims in Kosovo, Bosnia, Somalia, Kuwait, and Afghanistan counted for little. Even less thanks were earned by billions of dollars given to Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority. The Islamofascist vision of a Dark Age world run by unelected imams, in which women were secluded, homosexuals killed, Jews terrorized, non-Muslims routed, and freedoms squelched, registered little—even though this vision was at war with all that Western liberalism stands for.

This flawed idea that autocrats hate democracy more for what it does than what it represents is not new. On the eve of World War II, isolationists on the right insisted that America had treated Germany unfairly after World War I and had wrongly sided with British imperialism in its efforts to rub in the Germans' past defeat. "International Jewry" was blamed for poisoning the good will between the two otherwise friendly countries by demanding punitive measures from a victimized and impoverished German people. Likewise, poor Japan was supposedly unfairly cut off from American ore and petroleum, and hemmed in by provocative Anglo-American imperialists.

By the late 1940s things on the ground had changed somewhat, and the blame-America-first ideology adjusted accordingly. Now it was the turn of the old Left, which castigated "fascists" for ruining the hallowed American-Soviet wartime alliance by "isolating" and "surrounding" the Russians with hostile bases and allies. The same was supposedly true of Red China: We were told ad nauseam by idealists and "China hands" that Mao really wanted to cultivate American friendship but was spurned by our right-wing ideologues—as if there were nothing of the absolutism and innate thuggery in him that would soon account for 50 million or more of his own people murdered and starved.

Ditto the reactions to the animosity from such dictators as Ho Chi Minh and Fidel Castro. The Left assured us that both were actually neo-Jeffersonians, whose olive branches were crushed by unimaginative Cold Warriors and who only then went on to plan their gulags. Few seemed to think it natural that a free and powerful America would be hated by fascists and Communists—much less that it should be praised rather than castigated for earning such hatred.

SUPERSTITION AFTER SUPERSTITION

A second line of criticism maintains, again wrongly, that Americans are essentially weak. Before we went into Afghanistan, the Bush administration was hectored that the country's fierce people, colonial history, rugged terrain, hostile neighbors, foreign religion, and shattered infrastructure made an American military victory unlikely. We also forget now how the Left warned us of terrible casualties and millions of refugees before the Iraq war, and then went dormant until the insurgents emerged. Then the opposition resurfaced to assure us that Iraq was lost, only to grow quiet again after the Iraqi election and its regional aftershocks—a cycle that followed about the same 20-month timetable of military victory to voting in Afghanistan. Only America, it seems, can be an overweening bully and a pitiful helpless giant at nearly the same time.

Now a new geopolitical litany of gloom has arisen: The reserves are "shattered"; North Korea, Syria, and Iran are untouchable while we are "bogged down" in Iraq; we took our "eye off bin Laden"; a schedule for withdrawal from Iraq needs to be spelled out; there is no real American-trained Iraqi army; the entire Arab world hates us; and so on.

Such pessimism is also nothing new. In 1917, "a million men over there" was considered preposterous for a shadow of a military force. Yet by late 1918, seasoned doughboys were chasing Prussians out of Belgium. On the eve of World War II Charles Lindbergh returned from an obsequious visitation with Goering's generals to warn us that the ultra-modern Luftwaffe was unstoppable. Four years later it was in shambles, as four-engine American bombers reduced the Third Reich to ashes.

Japanese Zeros, supposed proof of comparative American backwardness in 1941-2, were the easy targets of "turkey shoots" by 1944, as American Hellcats and Corsairs blew them out of the skies. Later, Sputnik "proved" how far we were behind the socialist workhorse in Russia—even as we easily went to the moon first a little over a decade later. In short, the American military and economy has been habitually underestimated in the 20th century, even as the United States defeated Prussian imperialism, German Nazism, Italian fascism, Japanese militarism, and Stalinist Communism.

Nor in our more recent peacetime were we buried by stagflation, petroleum boycotts, the "energy crisis," nuclear "meltdowns," and all the other bogeymen prophesied to overwhelm the strength of the American state and people. We have met the "population bomb," "imperial overstretch," "Japan, Inc.," and the EU's "third way"—and we have come out just fine, thank you.

Still another line of criticism overestimates our enemies' strength. When suicide murderers dominated the news of the

Mr. Hanson is the author of *A War Like No Other*, forthcoming from Random House this summer.

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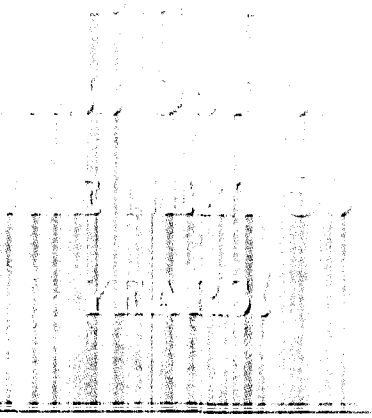

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intifada, followed by the car bombers and beheaders of the Sunni Triangle, many in the West despaired that there was no thwarting such fanatics. Perhaps they simply believed more in their cause than we did in ours. How can you stop someone who kills to die rather than merely dying to kill?

That Ariel Sharon in two years defeated the intifada by decapitating the Hamas leadership, building the fence, and humiliating Arafat was forgotten. In the same manner, few now write or think about how the United States military went into the heart of darkness in Fallujah and simply destroyed or routed the insurgents of that fundamentalist stronghold in less than two weeks, a historic operation that ensured a successful turnout on election day and an eventual takeover by an elected Iraqi government.

So this paradox of exaggerating the strength of our enemies is likewise an American trademark. Spiked-helmeted Prussians were considered vicious pros who would make short work of draftees who had trained with brooms and sticks. Indeed, the German Imperial Army of World War I may have fielded the most formidable foot soldiers of any age. Still, it was destroyed in less than four years by supposedly decadent and corrupt liberal democracies.

The Gestapo was the vanguard of a new Aryan super-race, pitiless and proud in its martial superiority. How could soda-jockeys of the Depression fight the Waffen SS with poor equipment, little training, and a happy-go-lucky attitude rather than engrained Hitler-worship and death-cult discipline? Rather easily as it turned out, as the Allies not only defeated Nazism but literally annihilated it in about five years.

Kamikazes were also felt to be otherworldly in their eerie celebration of death. But the U.S. Navy, Marines, and Army Air Corps were not impressed. They destroyed not just the death pilots but the very culture that launched them. In the end, Japanese militarists were shanghaiing English majors out of their universities and plying them with drink to fill out the eroding ranks of the "Divine Wind" and "Floating Chrysanthemums."

Finally, misguided pessimists claim that the United States is alone in the world. When George W. Bush orchestrated the fall of Saddam Hussein he was said to have alienated everyone, as if our friends in Eastern Europe, Britain, Australia, and India did not matter. Yet the same was said in 1941 when Latin America, Asia, and Africa were in thrall to the Axis. Neutrals wanted little to do with a disarmed United States that had unwisely found itself in a two-front war with the world's most formidable military powers. Indeed, the June 1941 invasion of Russia was about as multilateral as could be, with Eastern Europeans, Spaniards, Italians, and Finns all joining the invading armies of the Third Reich.

By the 1950s we seemed to have defeated Germany and Japan only to have subsequently "lost" China and Eastern Europe, as former defeated fascists became friends and once-allied neutrals and Communists turned hostile. Much of Asia and Latin America deified the mass-murdering Stalin and Mao, while deriding elected American presidents. The Richard Clarkes and Joe Wilsons of that age lectured about a paranoid Eisenhower administration, clumsy CIA work, and the general hopelessness of ever defeating global Communism, whose spores sprouted almost everywhere in the form of Nasserism, Pan-Arabism, Baathism, Castroism, and various "national liberation" movements.

SELF-CRITICISM VS. SELF-DELUSION

Why do Americans do all this to themselves? In part, the nature of an open society is constant self-critique. Our successes in creating an affluent and free citizenry only raise the bar higher, as we sense we are closer to heaven on earth—and with a little more education or money could walk like gods rather than crawl as men.

There are also some among us who are impatient with the give and take of a consensual society. These zealots harbor a secret admiration for the single-mindedness of the fanatic in pursuit of a utopian cause. Sen. Patty Murray, after all, once lectured the United States that it must emulate the good works of a bin Laden to better capture the hearts and minds of the Afghan people—as if such people always gravitate to the purity of a terrorist fanatic rather than to the slow work of democracy.

Finally, the intellectual class we often read and hear from is increasingly divorced from what makes America work, and especially from the sort of folk who join the military. They have little appreciation for the fact that the otherwise normal-looking soldiers of the U.S. Marine Corps are far more deadly than the robed and masked Baathist diehards or Taliban remnants—and that a fleet of Americans with GPS bombs can do more damage in a few seconds than most of the suicide bombers of the Middle East can do in a year.

It is wise to cite and even publicize our errors, and there have been many in this war, from the failure to secure the borders of Iraq and the disbanding of the Iraqi army to the first pullback from Fallujah and the delay in holding a plebiscite. Humility and circumspection are military assets as well, since much of what transpires in war is impossible to predict and victory goes to those who make the fewest mistakes. Moreover, we should never confuse the sharp dissent of the well-meaning critic with disloyalty to the cause.

But nor should we fall into our current pessimism, when in less than four years we have destroyed the two worst regimes in the Middle East, liberated 50 million Afghans and Iraqis, scattered al-Qaeda, avoided another promised 9/11 at home, and sent shock waves of democracy throughout the Arab world—so far at an aggregate cost of less than what was incurred on the first day of this unprovoked war. Car bombs are bad news, but in the shadows is the real story that terrorists are losing, and radical reform, the likes of which millions have never seen, is on the horizon. So let us ignore this American gloominess that is hardly novel but apparently innate to our public discourse. If the past is any guide, our present lack of optimism in this struggle presages its ultimate success.

A final prediction: By the end of this year, formerly critical liberal pundits, backsliding conservative columnists, once-fiery politicians, Arab "moderates," ex-statesmen and generals emeriti, smug stand-up comedians, recently strident Euros—perhaps even Hillary herself—will quietly come to appreciate what President Bush is attempting in the Middle East, as they begin to fathom that support for removing fascists and replacing them with democratic governments is always a good and noble thing and should not be mitigated by occasional setbacks and disappointments. In short, we are witnessing a great moral awakening, a radical break with an ugly past that was just the sort of thing that everyone was sort of for, sort of all along—sort of . . . **NR**

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the long view

ROB LONG

http://www.ontheDL.blogspot.journalspace.nk

"On the DL"

The official and glorious weblog of our Dear Leader

March 15, 2005

Woke up this morning and saw that the sun was shining and the temperature was perfect! (You're welcome, by the way) . . . thanks to my new invention which anticipates and corrects weather conditions. Spent the early morning golfing (shot a not-too-shabby 38) and then spent the rest of the day meeting the challenges of the next century.

Posted at 11:33 by the Dear Leader

Nuke Cams here and here (best viewed with a fast connection).

Posted at 11:39 by the Dear Leader

Atrios has an interesting post in which he speculates that what happened in Ohio during the recent "election" may have had its practice run in the 2002 mid-terms. He's done a lot of research into this and I'm not convinced he's wrong. I mean, something fishy had to have occurred there, especially in those suddenly all-Republican counties. Just from my personal experience, I can say that I didn't get one single comment from anyone who supported Bush, and my blog gets over 10,000,000 independent page-views a day! And they say *I'm* an unelected despot? WTF?

Posted at 11:46 by the Dear Leader

Fantastic exchange over at Daily Kos about all the hoopla and spin of the recent so-called elections in Iraq. I go over this in detail here and here and here. But the bottom line is, big deal. I'll believe it when I see it. We've got a lot of people over here with purple fingers (and toes, for that matter) and you don't see us turning it into a six-act play. Gimme a break. For the real story on this stuff, go to Kos or The Nation. I wish the MSM wasn't so monolithic!

Posted at 11:56 by the Dear Leader

Mickey Kaus at kausfiles wonders whether the troubles at CBS News are in some way connected to the continuing decline of interest in the front pages of *WaPo* and the *NYT* and the MSM in general. All I can say is, maybe. Maybe. That's the trouble with having all sorts of information available all the time. It's much better and more efficient to have one central place for people to get their news in a controlled and sanitized spot. Less distracting. Of course, if my blog was as one-sided as, say, The Corner, I'd hardly be the most widely read weblog in the world, would I?

Heh.

Posted at 12:29 by the Dear Leader

Great news! According to this recent U.N.-sponsored study, we NoKos have the lowest incidence of childhood obesity—and the lowest rates of obesity among adults—in the whole world!

> Our study indicates that the population along the northern edge of the Korean Peninsula [snip] from [snip] low [snip] weight [snip] nutritional [snip] severe [snip] weight [snip] health . . .

Don't read the whole thing.

UPDATE: Let's all take this time—traditionally the "lunch hour"—to celebrate the recent U.N. findings by skipping lunch! Why slow ourselves down with a heavy meal? Just a few sips of warm water is all I need to keep the revolution rarin' to go. Did I say "warm" water? Doesn't have to be warm. In fact, researchers at the North Korean Nutritional Institute think that there are loads of health benefits from drinking only brackish standing water from naturally occurring ponds.

Posted at 1:37 by the Dear Leader

Not sure which side of the whole nukes/non-nukes Andrew Sullivan thinks he's on. My guess is that he's a plant by the reactionary forces who are trying to turn back the people's revolution here in our glorious homeland and elsewhere. But it's interesting that he's making such a big deal about Abu Ghraib. Methinks something's going on here. And I'm not the only one.

Posted at 2:45 by the Dear Leader

Flame Wars! Susan Estrich vs. Mike Kinsley, on the anti-female bias on the op-ed page of the *LATimes*. Gotta say, as much as I like and respect Kinsley—especially his thoughts on Jimmy Carter and the ridiculous anti-nuke treaty we didn't actually agree to—Susan Estrich makes me smile. Love her on Fox. If she wanted to, I'd gladly find her a place here in my organization.

Posted at 2:55 by the Dear Leader

From a poster at Democratic Underground:

> Couldn't it be that the racist empire-building neo-con(artists) in the Bushitler White (only) House are searching for a new demon to attack, like North Korea, a country that has to date never invaded anyone? Unlike us?

Couldn't put it better myself. Read the whole thing.

Posted at 3:07 by the Dear Leader

Dog blogging! Here's a jpeg of my wonderful new Labrador! Doesn't he look delicious?

Posted at 4:21 by the Dear Leader

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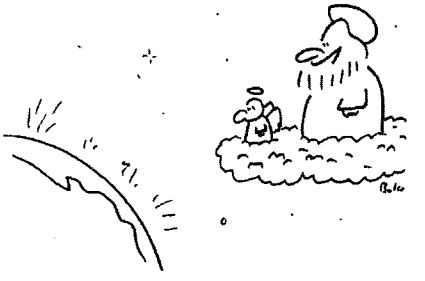
HELP!!!!

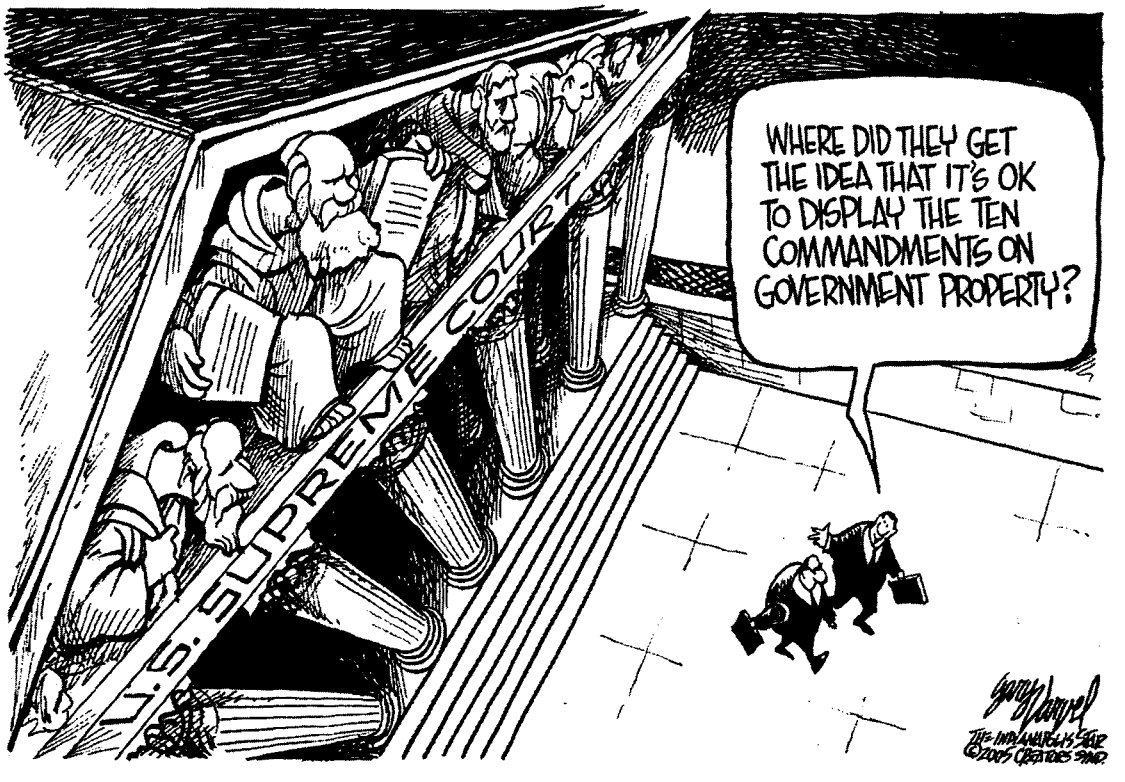
The Big Question

Schroeder put on a happy face.
Chirac, though no cowboy,
Lasso'd his knees while managing
A look critics called "coy."
Off stage, the act returned to type
And swiftly drew the blinds;
But for two February days,
Ye gods, those bumps and grinds!

—W. H. von Dreele



"I know they're a little unruly, but after all, I had to make them out of chaos."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WHERE DID THEY GET THE IDEA THAT IT'S OK TO DISPLAY THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ON GOVERNMENT PROPERTY?
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Blushing Crimson

Privilege: Harvard and the Education of the Ruling Class, by Ross Gregory Douthat (Hyperion, 304 pp., $24.95)

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

THIS is an account, written just after leaving Cambridge, of the author's four years at Harvard. He is reassuringly disinclined to hagiolatry, but he does not scorn Harvard's special endowments. These derive, of course, from ongoing resources—the faculty, the library, the plant—but the whole distills substantially from institutional venerability and a felt preeminence.

The figure fleets across my memory, from a query ten years ago: Seventy percent of aspirant freshmen who are accepted by both Yale and Harvard opt to go to Harvard. The university is comfortable with its singularity, and the author doesn't disguise the satisfactions taken by the student body from knowing that they are matriculating as Harvard students, and are presumptive members of the national elite, even if it will take a while to establish individual distinction.

Ross Douthat has certainly done that by writing this book. It is a satisfying account of the Harvard experience and quickly we learn that there are no themes in that experience asking to be consummated. Education at Harvard does not provide an across-the-board third act. Graduation ceremonies are merely transactional—as Douthat shrewdly observes also about most undergraduate sex experiences—not "transcendent." The four years give the students opportunities without ever attempting to shape them, and academic vigilance is scant. Douthat quotes a passage from Allan Bloom, who wrote reproachfully about the incidence of contemporary students who matriculate "hoping to find out what career they want to have." Such students are, paradoxically, misfits. "This undecided student is an embarrassment to most universities, because he seems to be saying, 'I am a whole human being. Help me form myself in my wholeness and let me develop my real potential'; and he is the one to whom they have nothing to say."

Douthat was a quiet conservative while at Harvard, if that can be said of someone who rose to be the editor of the *Salient*, the Harvard conservative paper. And he reveals that he is a Catholic, who from time to time is tempted to fidelity. He has sharp eyes for the color of college life, at trivial and intellectual levels, and tells about student impostures, intemperance, toleration, and the ambient confusion as clever and lucky students make their way through their schooling in cosmopolitan academic quarters.

Harvard is hardly immune to the strictures of conformity; Douthat describes how some compromises are effected. He does this with a fine mix of indignation and resignation. Consider the question of grade inflation. "In 1965, around 20 percent of students earned B+ or above averages; five years later, the number was 48 percent." One reason for this, to be sure, was to help students dodge the draft. If a student's grades were failing, he might end up in Vietnam.

But grades did not fall with Saigon. This was the natural effect of high self-esteem: If you consider yourself a member of the elite, you expect to be acknowledged as such. The mighty Harvey Mansfield resolved how honorably to face the problem, and addressed his opening class by saying that he would issue *two* grades. One grade would faithfully reflect his estimate of the student's achievements. The second would reflect his submission to the protocols. "The higher grade will be sent to the registrar's office and will appear on your transcript. . . . It will ensure, as I have said, that you will not be penalized for taking a class with me." But Professor Mansfield stuck a piece of ginger into the back end of the self-satisfied by closing, "And of course, only you will know whether you actually deserve it."

Douthat answers many questions that come to mind. How wealthy are Harvard students? About 70 percent of them have parents who earn more than $100,000 per year. What subjects are especially sought out? Economics comes first; and, interestingly, it is in that field that students find the odd scholar who is forthrightly conservative. That's because the market is king: its dispositions, ineluctable. The separation between student liberals and student conservatives can usually be measured by a five percentile sausage separating their positions on appropriate taxation. Douthat is eloquent in transcribing the demoralization of education when it lacks eschatological flavor; but he is not the protester who superordinates his concern for what is not there, so as to exclude what is there, which is everything from free condoms to the poetry of learning.

His fine coda tells of the author's sensitivity and the range of his concern. "I hope, in the end, that I love Harvard as we should love the world: not because it is good (it is not) but because there is good in it, and things worth fighting for. Perhaps the rest will pass away, until in my memory and the memory of my classmates only the best remains, the beauty of the place and the promise of greatness, a promise that went unfulfilled in my four years but endures nonetheless—as if around another corner, through another ivied gate, there waits the university of our imagination, the Harvard of our unrequited dreams." **NR**

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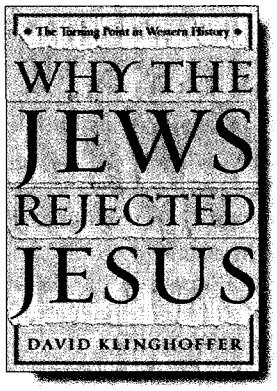
Defender of The Faith



Why the Jews Rejected Jesus: The Turning Point in Western History, by David Klinghoffer (Doubleday, 247 pp., $24.95)

MICHAEL POTEMRA

A Jew today will frequently encounter the well-meaning Christian who is, frankly, puzzled: Why *do* Jews remain Jews? Hasn't the old issue been settled by mere numbers, by the Christian preponderance in both population and cultural influence? Why don't the Jews just be good sports, and go along with the rest of us who are fortunate enough to be in the majority of Americans, i.e., those who accept Jesus as the Messiah? The easy answer is the one Thomas More gave in *A Man for All Seasons*. Norfolk was hectoring him: "Dammit, Thomas! . . . Why can't you do as I did and come with us, for fellowship!" To which More responded: "And when we die, and you are sent to heaven for doing your conscience, and I am sent to hell for not doing mine, will you come with me, for fellowship?"

Here I stand, *ich kann nicht anders*. It can be a brave answer, but it remains an intellectually easy one: Who can argue with an assertion of conscience? David Klinghoffer will not settle for the easy answer: He demands a solid intellectual underpinning for the Jewish faith, one that shows it to be reasonable—because the Jewish conscience is based not on an act of willfulness but on a rigorously formed tradition of faith and intellect.

Klinghoffer's excellent new book takes religious truth claims seriously. This is not, he writes, something that can be taken for granted: "The leadership of the American Jewish community is not committed to the belief that their ancestral religion is even true and can be defended on rational grounds." This "strong relativistic tendency" risks reducing Judaism to a social artifact, curated for reasons of sentimentality and tribal nostalgia. Klinghoffer is a very amiable fellow (he was one of my predecessors as NR's literary editor, and we have met on a number of occasions), but he is clearly not afraid to rattle the family china cabinet.

Why, then, did—do—Jews reject Jesus? To answer this question, Klinghoffer takes us into the thought-world of the Hebrew Scriptures, and of 1st-century A.D. Judaism. Let's consider, as a particularly important example, the religious leaders' attitude toward the commandments. They had been warned in Deuteronomy that "you must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God" (4:2), and that you shall observe these commandments "always" (11:1). Now comes Jesus, presenting his listeners with innovative loopholes—didn't David break the Sabbath (Matt. 12:3)?—and appearing to put Himself above the commandments: "The Son of man [Jesus Himself] is lord of the Sabbath" (Matt. 12:8). In asserting that the Sabbath is made for man, and not man for the Sabbath (Mk. 2:27), Jesus indicates that He is in a position of judgment above both man and Sabbath. In the Sermon on the Mount, he espouses an attitude of contrast between the hitherto authoritative teaching of the religious leaders ("You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times . . .") and his own definitive new teaching ("But I say to you . . .").

To the traditional believers of His time, this must have sounded shocking: Surely the Messiah they were awaiting would not overturn their most cherished religious beliefs? In this context, when Jesus admonished them, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets" (Matt. 5:17), it might have been heard as less than sincere.

But what about the Old Testament prophecies that are quoted to prove that Jesus is the Messiah? While Klinghoffer is skeptical of the "proof-texting" approach, he is no slouch at it himself, as he shows in his picking apart of various passages. He asks, however, that readers look further, past ambiguous O.T. phrases that may or may not find echoes in the story of Jesus, to the overall picture of the Messiah adumbrated by the prophets. If one is to be accepted as the Messiah, writes Klinghoffer, "let him do what the 'son of man,' the promised Messiah, had been advertised as being destined to do from Daniel back through Ezekiel and Isaiah and the rest . . . Let him rule as a monarch, his kingship extending over 'all peoples, nations, and languages.' Let him return the exiles and rebuild the Temple and defeat the oppressors and establish universal peace, as the prophets also said." In this, one can hear a reverberation of the most emotionally powerful argument against the Christian faith: The world sure doesn't *look* redeemed.

Klinghoffer thus makes good on his title, offering a cogent intellectual explanation of why Jews reject Jesus. Less successful is his attempt to posit this rejection as "the turning point in Western history." "Had the Jews embraced Jesus," he contends, "the Jesus movement might have remained a Jewish sect [that] would in all likelihood have perished along with all the other heterodox Jewish sects that disappeared after the destruction of Jerusalem." About this contention, two things need to be said: First, it presupposes what the book sets out to prove, i.e., that Jesus was not the Messiah. If Jesus was in fact the Messiah, his movement would have spread throughout the world even if it had been accepted by all of the Jews. Second, the precise element of Judaism that made it unlikely to become a mass religion was its "scandal of particularity," the fact that it asserted a God Who acted in a particular Chosen People. Christianity adopted *the very same* scandal of particularity, proclaiming that the One Triune God was not the God of the philosophers, but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of Israel.

A related weakness of the book is the author's attempt to drive a wedge between Jesus and Paul. It's one thing to say that Jews should not be Christian; Klinghoffer is on much shakier ground in suggesting that Christ was not a Christian. The latter opinion has been, of course, the received wisdom of Christian modernists since the 19th century, but it has very skimpy scriptural warrant. Why was Jesus so reticent

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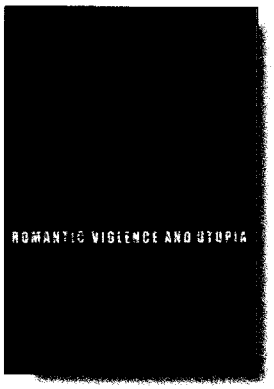
about proclaiming Messianic status in his public speeches? Many plausible explanations have been advanced for this "Messianic secret": Maybe He wanted to avoid becoming a political leader; maybe He wanted His Resurrection to precede, and pave the way for, His eventual public Messianic glory. The explanation that Paul made claims for Jesus that Jesus Himself had not believed to be true is unscriptural.

These two cavils aside, Klinghoffer's book deserves much praise. For Jewish readers, it provides an impressive apologia for the Jewish faith; all Jewish parents should strongly consider giving this book to their children as a bar (or bat) mitzvah gift.

For Christians—who will surely account for the lion's share of the book's readership—Klinghoffer has created a window into the Jewish mind, an opportunity to understand from within the faith of God's covenant people, to which faith—and people—Christians remain bound. At one point, he quotes the medieval Jewish theologian Moses Maimonides: "All these matters relating to Jesus . . . only served to clear the way for King Messiah, to prepare the whole world to worship God with one accord." Maimonides was writing in a context of anti-Christian polemic, but his words ring true in the Christian heart: Christians, too, believe that the first coming of Jesus paved the way for His second, this time as the King who will fulfill—visibly, beyond the shadow of doubt—the words of the Hebrew prophets.

The Christian reading this book, struggling with its arguments, is in the position of Jacob wrestling with the stranger in Genesis 32: We will not let him go, until he gives us a blessing—which blessing he provides, amply, in his final pages. "It served God's purposes," he writes, "that there be a unique religion, acknowledging Him, for the people who spread out from Europe. . . . [That religion] departs from Judaism in many ways. But in revering the God of Israel, it contains the seeds for an ultimate reunification of the peoples in God's service." On that day, wrote Zechariah, "the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one" (14:9). This is the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of Jesus and Paul; and of Christians and Jews today. **NR**

The Politics Of Blood



The Bullet's Song: Romantic Violence and Utopia, by William Pfaff (Simon & Schuster, 384 pp., $27.95)

PAUL HOLLANDER

THIS ambitious book correctly identifies—and helps the reader better to understand—some of the most important and contentious developments of the past century, including "the conflation of revolutionary commitment with liberating violence," "the ability of secular utopian thought to inspire lethal dogmatic idealism," and "the desire to find a post-religious moral explanation for life." William Pfaff, longtime columnist for the *International Herald Tribune* and author of other studies in contemporary political history, explores the connections between the pursuit of romantic self-fulfillment and political violence, between secularization and utopia-seeking, and between meaning and meaninglessness in history—all against the background of the fundamentals of human nature.

The book also explores familiar territory, in its lamentations of the ravages of modernity—with a special emphasis on the demise of old-fashioned heroism, and of chivalrous ways of conducting war. The tone is often reminiscent of the writings of George Kennan, as it justifiably, if sometimes exaggeratedly, bemoans the moral and aesthetic decline modernity brings about. The author also shares with Kennan a temptation to see—sometimes questionably—moral equivalence between the misconduct of the United States and that of other political actors around the world.

Pfaff pursues these weighty matters by examining the lives and ideas of a handful of 20th-century intellectuals and artists who "imposed themselves upon the author as living evidence of the history of the modern crisis," most of them "also engaged in re-creating themselves as someone they were not." The best known among them are T. E. Lawrence, André Malraux, and Arthur Koestler. Less well known, at least to American readers, are Gabriele D'Annunzio, Ernst Jünger, Filippo Marinetti, and Willi Münzenberg. Wholly unknown is Vladimir Peniakoff, "an engineer by training, from a cultivated, assimilated, partly Jewish Belgian family of Russian origin," who is discussed at greater length than some other far more illustrious figures; his claim to the author's attention and sympathy appears to be his attempts to participate in World War II in a humane, moral, and chivalrous fashion. Also discussed (in the more-obscure category) is Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916), "a rich cavalry officer" who, after being enamored of the Tuaregs of North Africa, became a Trappist monk, inspired the founding of a religious sect, and remained an admirer of "primitive people." Che Guevara gets less than two pages; there are many scattered references to Mussolini.

It is not entirely clear what criteria governed the selection of these individuals, and the uneven amount of space devoted to them. To be sure, T. E. Lawrence, Malraux, and D'Annunzio coherently exemplify the intellectual-turned-political-activist flirting with the warrior role. Koestler, Malraux, and Münzenberg have in common their support for and subsequent disillusionment with the Soviet Union and what it represented. Jünger, an important German writer in the first half of the 20th century,

Mr. Hollander's books include *Political Pilgrims*, *Anti-Americanism*, *Political Will and Personal Belief*, and *Discontents: Postmodern and Postcommunist*. He also edited *Understanding Anti-Americanism*, published last year.

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fought valiantly in World War I and believed in the purifying and ennobling functions of war. Koestler, a political activist, was not drawn to the warrior role; nor was Münzenberg, an accomplished propagandist serving Moscow in the 1930s. Marinetti was a so-called Futurist, a painter and writer who also believed in the redeeming qualities of political violence and was a precursor of Italian Fascism.

If impact and influence had been the criteria of selection, Castro, Lenin, and Trotsky should have been included: All were 20th-century revolutionaries, violence-prone utopia-seekers, and (arguably) intellectuals. For similar reasons, Frantz Fanon and Sartre would also have been good candidates. The disparities in the importance, character, and lifestyle of the figures discussed weaken the coherence of the narrative, as does the alternation of the often lengthy and discursive biographical sections with the more diffuse philosophical reflections, the latter often not closely integrated with the former.

Such difficulties notwithstanding, this is a thoughtful and thought-provoking book devoted to the basic proposition that deserves reaffirmation and further elucidation, namely that ideas drive history. The ideas have often been rather dubious and their attempted realization has had spectacularly disastrous consequences, as shown by the history of 20th-century totalitarianism and nationalism. Highly distinguished intellectuals often made startlingly bad political judgments and supported unworthy causes. For example, Pfaff's list of those who were enthusiastic about World War I includes Weber, Thomas Mann, Freud, Durkheim, Rilke, Proust, Bergson, Galsworthy, Thomas Hardy, and Henry James; and also scientists such as Röntgen, Planck, and Haldane.

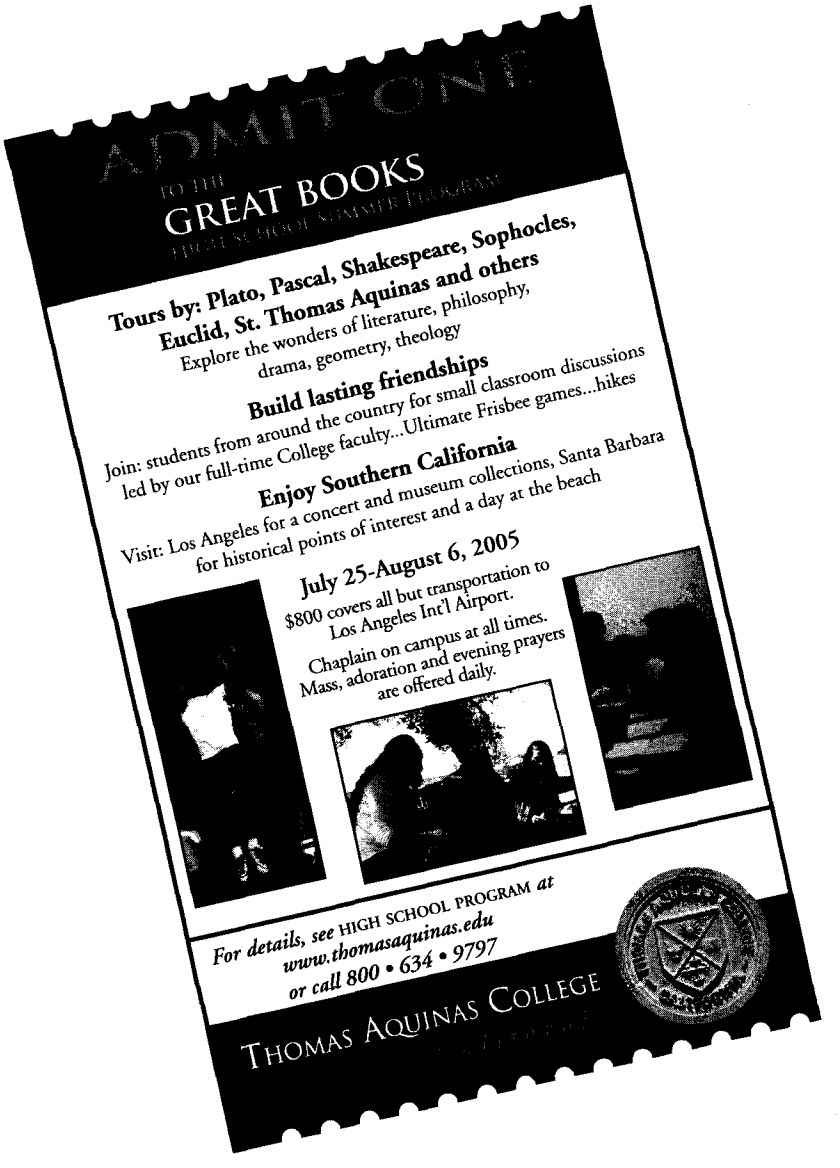
Pfaff contends that World War I was a unique watershed-catastrophe (and also, more questionably, "the most important event of the 20th century"), responsible for the rise of both Communist and Nazi totalitarianism as well as other smaller currents of violent utopia-seeking in recent history:

> The utopian response to the cultural and political crisis of 1914-1918 . . . the crisis that defined the 20th century and potentially the 21st . . . took rightist form in Italy and Germany . . . and a successful leftist form in Russia. The idea of total redemptive transformation of human society through political means, the most influential myth of modern Western political society from 1789 to the present day, remains with us.

Pfaff argues persuasively that the persistence of war, and more generally political violence, originates in both a meaning-seeking impulse and an innate aggressive disposition:

> Life ordinarily is experienced as shapeless and unmalleable. We make our ways through days of random incident . . . and rarely are we given an opportunity to take determining action that gives meaning to our existence. War provides such an occasion, not necessarily by providing grand causes but in presenting small, crystalline, vital, individual choices . . . The moral function of war is to recall humans to the reality at the core of existence: The violence is part of our nature and is responsible for the fact that human history is a chronicle of tragedies.

War is also appealing because it helps to validate "a popular desire for restored community," for "spiritual awakening" and an escape from the "narrowness and pettiness" allegedly more common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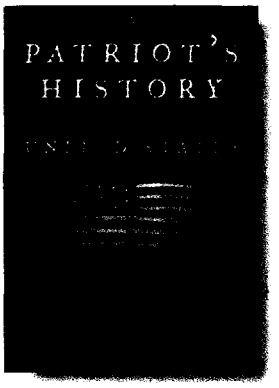
under more stable and routinized circumstances; it helps to dispel boredom. Revolution, or the pretense of it, performs the same functions—as illustrated by the radical social-political movements in the West during the 1960s.

The importance of political violence in promising to make life more meaningful has increased in modern times owing to the rise of individualism and the associated preoccupation with self-realization (as illustrated by the dispositions of several individuals here discussed) and to the fact that secularization has made the world less meaningful and comprehensible. A subsidiary reason has been the upsurge of nationalistic and ethnic conflicts in recent times—further occasions for joyous and violent collective self-assertion.

Regrettably, this volume sheds little light on the type of violence in the forefront of public concern since 9/11. Pfaff overlooks the uniqueness of much of the recent Islamic violence and equates it with the kind secular terrorist groups such as the Italian Red Brigades and the Baader-Meinhof gang used to perpetrate. But these groups and individuals were not suicidal, and lacked belief in supernatural rewards for their good works. Pfaff is also probably wrong in asserting that "utopian thought rests upon belief in progress"; it seems rather that such ideas rest on belief that change should be induced by willful, violent, and revolutionary deeds. Belief in progress, by contrast, is compatible with moderation because it implies that positive change does not depend on acts of violence or exertions of political will.

Although hopes for secular salvation in the Western world have receded in recent decades, there remain influential subcultures and elite groups, among them many intellectuals, attached to the belief that there is a "collective solution to the human condition." This volume, although somewhat haphazardly assembled, provides powerful and eloquent refutation of such fantasies, and ends with the suggestion that "the only thing we can remake is ourselves." But, as the book also makes clear, there are limits even to that. **NR**

A Sense Of Awe



A Patriot's History of the United States: From Columbus's Great Discovery to the War on Terror, by Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen (Sentinel, 944 pp., $29.95)

MATTHEW SPALDING

THE most influential historian among today's college students isn't David McCullough, despite the wide public appeal of his several books. It's likely an obscure writer named Howard Zinn, whose *A People's History of the United States* has gone through five editions and several printings, and sold well over a million copies. It should come as no surprise that the book has been successful mostly because college professors and high-school teachers require the book in their classes.

A People's History, as the title might suggest, is written from a neo-Marxist perspective. The book is, in Zinn's words, a "history disrespectful of governments and respectful of people's movements of resistance," portraying states and statesmen as pawns of bourgeois elites standing in the way of the proletarian revolution. One comment about the movement from the Old World to the New sums up the thesis: "Behind the English invasion of North America, behind their massacre of Indians, their deception, their brutality, was that special powerful drive born in civilizations based on private profit." All history, in the end, is the history of class struggle.

Mr. Spalding directs the B. Kenneth Simon Center for American Studies at the Heritage Foundation.

The more basic problem is that *A People's History* is not all that extreme by today's academic standards. Variations on the argument, seen through the prisms of class, race, and gender studies, dominate almost any mainstream U.S. history textbook. Indeed, Zinn's radical history is but part of the intellectual transformation wrought by progressive historians (starting with Carl Becker, Frederick Jackson Turner, and Charles Beard) who, over the course of the 20th century, declared American ideas and institutions outdated and oppressive, a barrier to change and reform. The result has been a constant deconstruction of the past according to the latest take on societal evolution.

Hearkening back to the histories and historians of the more distant past, *A Patriot's History of the United States* is a new book that takes a very different approach to the course of human events. Rather than viewing those events as mere steps in an ever-advancing march of liberal history, it sees individuals and their ideas, and by extension nations and their principles, as the motivating force. And so it takes seriously the thoughts and actions of political figures: It demonstrates that qualities of deliberation and decision, character and virtue, matter deeply. Flaws and mistakes are there, too, but they are just that, which is to say they are exceptions and not the rule. The book doesn't reinterpret history according to the academic fashion but seeks to present history as it happened, trying to understand the intentions of the main actors and the movement of events.

A Patriot's History has its idiosyncrasies, to be sure; like any sweeping epic, it isn't perfect. But as an antidote to *A People's History* and its comrades, the book succeeds mightily. Consider how the two books treat the American Founding. In *A People's History*, the American Founders are said to have "created the most effective system of national control devised in modern times" in order to "take over land, profits, and political power from the favorites of the British Empire . . . and create a consensus of popular support for the rule of a new, privileged leadership." It's a modern adaptation of the

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Beard thesis that our greedy forefathers plotted for their own economic interest. At best, the American Revolution is a misstep in the sweeping struggle for democracy on the part of disenfranchised and underprivileged groups searching for social justice.

In contrast, *A Patriot's History* rejects the economic determinism of Beard, Zinn, and others who "wrongly assume that people were (and are) incapable of acting outside of self-interest." Instead, the book lets history tell a different story, of a concern for the common good and equal rights, the public interest and popular self-government under the rule of law. And so it spends considerable time developing the ideas of the American Revolution, the theory of republican government, the importance of religion and the concept of religious liberty, the lessons of the early state constitutions and the Articles of Confederation, the arguments of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists, and the extensive debates about the Constitution. "No matter how Beard and his successors torture the statistics, they cannot make the Constitutional Convention scream 'class struggle,'" the authors conclude. "The debate was genuine; it was about important ideas, and men took positions not for what they gained financially but for what they saw as the truth."

A Patriot's History is biased in its own way, of course, for it assumes that "if the story of America's past is told fairly, the result cannot be anything but a deepened patriotism, a sense of awe at the obstacles overcome, the passions invested, the blood and tears spilled, and the nation that was built." Anything that has to do with patriotism has long been controversial in academic circles. The idea that the teaching of American history might actually foster patriotism is to some deeply problematic. The rejected assumption, which is the foundation of *A Patriot's History*, is that there are principles and purposes reflected in American history that make this imperfect country worthy of our affection, and that honest history should explain those principles and illustrate those purposes as the centerpiece of our nation's story.

"Every child in America should be acquainted with his own country," Noah Webster wrote in 1788. "As soon as he opens his lips, he should rehearse the history of his own country." Not for the sake of a national myth meant to create blind affection, but to prompt an enlightened love of country—or, as Webster put it, to "implant in the minds of the American youth the principles of virtue and of liberty and inspire them with just and liberal ideas of government and with an inviolable attachment to their own country."

As study after study shows that our students know less and less about our history, and at a time when our deepest principles and national convictions are—sometimes literally—under attack at home and abroad, *A Patriot's History* is a welcome, refreshing, and solid contribution to relearning what we have forgotten and remembering why this nation is good, and worth defending. **NR**

CHURCHILL

Grandma Fallon flew up to her feet,
Knocking the kettle to the kitchen floor,
Drawing herself up stiff and tall:
"I am a *British* subject still!"
She said as she shivered on a Dublin street
All day to see her Queen.
She never would become American,
Refusing to relinquish that dark knot
Of hurt and rage
That swelled her servile heart.

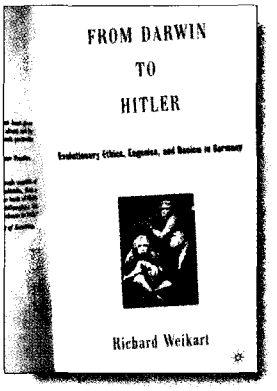
The Black and Tans are gone.
Gone, gone that brutal brand
Of iced civility
That impressed on the lowliest
Dirt man the dream of gentleman.
Few mourn today
In Dublin Nairobi and Bombay.
The world moves to a less impressive sway.

Tame, tame the Lion toothless, starved and mewed,
Woke briefly from his marble spell
To rip the jackal with his claws
By an indomitable old will
That found some scraps of dignity to save.

An empire passes in that wave . . .
We doubt we can go down as well.

—RICHARD O'CONNELL

Murderous Science



From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics, and Racism in Germany, by Richard Weikart (Palgrave Macmillan, 324 pp., $59.95)

M. D. AESCHLIMAN

It is an open question whether civilization will survive Darwinism, whose inspiration for Nazism, militarism, racism, wars of extermination, eugenics, abortion, and euthanasia is amply documented in Richard Weikart's excellent new book. In precise and careful detail Weikart narrates an indispensable chapter of cultural and intellectual history that had tragic consequences: the growing ascendancy in Germany in the period 1860-1933 of Social Darwinist ideas that fostered a ruthless, amoral view of the human person and of the relations between individuals, groups, nations, and races. Though in this period all "advanced" Western nations (and Japan) were affected by the Darwinian bacillus, whose revival in new and seductive forms we see today, for complex reasons Germany was the land in which it grew strongest and had the most tragic consequences. Bismarck's success in unifying Germany through warfare and

Mr. Aeschliman is a professor of education at Boston University, professor of English at the University of Italian Switzerland, and author of *The Restitution of Man: C. S. Lewis and the Case Against Scientism*.

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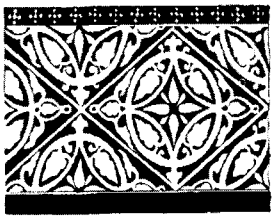
Germany's growing industrial power in competition with Britain and France gave prominence and prestige to "blood and iron" and ideas of ruthless realpolitik, which a century earlier had been articulated by the Machiavellian Frederick "the Great." Like distinguished earlier scholars such as Carlton J. H. Hayes and his student Jacques Barzun, Weikart has no doubt that "Darwinism undermined traditional morality and the value of human life."

The key figures in German "Darwinismus" were Ernest Haeckel and Nietzsche, but Weikart's book is also largely concerned with a host of less well-known German biologists, medical doctors, and social scientists who promoted Darwinism to great effect. Much valuable documentation appears here in English for the first time. Darwin himself was very pleased at the growing influence of his thinking in Germany. In 1868 he wrote to a German scholar: "The support which I receive from Germany is my chief ground for hoping that our views will ultimately prevail." Haeckel, his most important German disciple, praised Darwin in a letter a decade later for having "shown man his true place in nature . . . thereby overthrowing the anthropocentric fable." The "anthropocentric fable" is the belief in the special character of human life, the sacredness of the human person, and the absolute warrant of conscience and Christian or Kantian ethics. Many contemporary Darwinists, such as Peter Singer and James Rachels, are exhilarated by the Darwinian liberation from ethics, conveniently forgetting the 1914-1945 chapter of modern moral history that had so much to do with the "liberated" cynicism, fury, and cruelty of Social Darwinism.

On the first page of his book Weikart quotes from the same critical 1859 letter to Darwin from his Cambridge mentor, Adam Sedgwick, that Jacques Barzun quoted from in his magisterial 1941 book, *Darwin, Marx, Wagner: Critique of a Heritage*: "There is a moral or metaphysical part of nature as well as a physical. A man who denies this is deep in the mire of folly." To break the link between the material and the moral, Sedgwick went on, would "damage" and "brutalize" humanity and "sink the human race into a lower grade of degradation than any into which it has fallen since its written records tell us of its history." The hysterical, obscene strife, carnage, and cruelty of the period 1914-1945 are here foreshadowed with prophetic power.

In fact Weikart's book raises without treating—as being beyond his task—one of the most painful dilemmas of contemporary civilization, a dilemma of which most common citizens are often dimly aware but which many scientists, caught in the grip of curiosity (*libido sciendi*), the will to power (*libido dominandi*), and dangerously vague utilitarian idealism, resolutely wish to ignore or deny: the destructive threat an omnicompetent science poses to ethics. Even liberal commentators such as Richard Hofstadter and, more recently, Stephen Jay Gould (in *Rocks of Ages*) have found themselves defending parts of William Jennings Bryan's ethical critique of Darwinism, which was the product not only of Bryan's Christian religious beliefs and democratic political loyalties but also of his revulsion at the German Social Darwinism and militarism that he believed had been a major cause of World War I. Though Bryan was no intellectual, Weikart, Hofstadter, and Gould credit him with powerful insight on this point. (Along the same lines, Albert Alschuler has recently documented—in his book *Law Without Values: The Life, Work, and Legacy of Justice Holmes*—the American Social Darwinist nihilism of the "mature" Oliver Wendell Holmes.)



One book on the widespread participation of German medical doctors in Nazi human experimentation, sterilization, euthanasia, and genocide is titled *Murderous Science*. Weikart's book itself draws on Detlev J. K. Peukert's important essay on the Holocaust with the haunting title, "The Genesis of the 'Final Solution' from the Spirit of Science." It was the lonely "knight of faith" Kierkegaard who, like his English Christian contemporary Adam Sedgwick, warned in the 19th century that "in the end, all corruption will come about as a consequence of the natural sciences." The uses of the words "nature" and "natural" in contemporary moral and educational discourse are utterly ambiguous, promiscuous, and obscurantist.

Weikart's book displays in detail how "the survival of the fittest," the purposeful extermination of the weak and vulnerable and of "racial enemies," came to seem the obvious dictates of "natural law" and science to thousands of apparently well-educated German intellectuals in the period 1860-1933, a period in which the German university system was the envy of the world and the model for other nations (such as America). He notes that by and large only Catholics and some Socialists resisted the ascendant Darwinian picture and the political, social, and moral ideas that came with it. Yet they were easily and widely mocked as retrograde, superstitious, and sentimental "humanitarians," a term connoting weakness and timidity.

Weikart notes Nietzsche's role in promoting an alluring, amoral, post-Darwinian philosophy throughout Germany and the educated world, helping create what Carlton J. H. Hayes called "a generation of materialism." Nietzsche's brilliant rhetoric promoted "the higher breeding of humanity, including the unsparing destruction of all degenerates and parasites" (*Ecce Homo*). We are not far from Darwin and his eugenic cousin Galton here, or from the influential racist Gobineau, much admired in Germany, whom Tocqueville rebuked on Christian grounds. We are also not far from Hitler.

In conclusion, Weikart treats Hitler not as an anarchic criminal and madman, but as a charismatic but principled Social Darwinist with a racist, utilitarian worldview that was the fruit of the 70 years of Darwinist thinking in Germany that Weikart has documented. Hitler's idolatry of the Germans as the "culture-bearing" people reminds us of the seductive temptation, not only in Germany or in the past, to replace traditional Christian religion and ethics with "culture" (often so much more exciting, bold, and novel) and science (apparently so much more certain). He also suggests that celebratory contemporary Darwinists such as Singer and Rachels—and all who believe in the omnicompetence of natural science—have learned nothing from the tragic 20th century. **NR**

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The Liberals' Lost Decade

The Eighties: America in the Age of Reagan, by John Ehrman (Yale, 304 pp., $27.50)

DAVID FRUM

THERE's no point reviewing books unless you are going to give the reader an honest assessment. And unfortunately, delivering honest assessments is not always a pleasant duty.

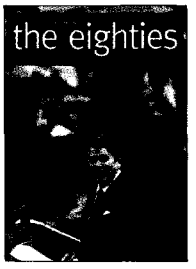
John Ehrman, the author of *The Eighties*, is obviously a conscientious and careful historian. His research is thorough; his conclusions are fair-minded; he has obviously worked hard. His book comes recommended by conservative heroes George Nash and David Gelernter. I wish I could tell you that reading this book would be worth your time and trouble, but I can't. There is nothing much wrong with the book, but there is nothing much right with it either. It is plodding, conventional, and dull. Skip it.

Because *The Eighties* has so little of interest to say, it leaves one wondering: Maybe there is nothing interesting left to be said about this passionately debated period. Maybe the political controversies of the Reagan years burned so hot that they consumed all their potential fuel.

And yet, as I brood over it, it seems to me that there is at least one large topic about which there remains a great deal to say—and that it is a merit of Ehrman's book that he does seem to have noticed what this topic is.

We conservatives have told ourselves a story about the recent past. It's the story of "the rise of the Right," as William Rusher called it in his important memoir. This story usually begins with the Goldwater debacle of 1964. From that disaster, conservatives learned important lessons about political strategy and tactics. They found themselves a new and more appealing champion in Ronald Reagan. And over the next 16 years, they built themselves a political movement that won the presidency in 1980—and that now seems to have emerged as a governing national majority.

Over the past four or five years, this story has been confirmed by a growing number of nonconservative writers. (Indeed, the single best book about the Goldwater campaign, *Before the Storm*, was written by a red-hot liberal, Rick Perlstein.) This story is obviously very gratifying for conservatives, because it makes us the stars of the show, the makers of our own destiny. The trouble is, this story is not quite true. The country did not turn to the right after 1964 because conservatives were so convincing. It turned right because liberals made such an unholy mess of things. Liberalism was not pushed. It jumped.



Crime; riots; foreign-policy weakness; environmental extremism; disdain for the values and beliefs of ordinary voters; economic mismanagement—the list of self-inflicted disasters that liberalism brought upon itself in the 1960s and 1970s stretches on and on and on. *Saturday Night Live*, of all places, summed up what had gone wrong with a brilliant sketch at the end of the 1988 election: an imaginary party hosted by Michael Dukakis (played by Jon Lovitz). At the very end, a Joan Baez lookalike strums her guitar and sings a heartfelt anthem:

> Unilateral disarmament, abortions on demand:
> Take everybody's guns away, and toss them in the sand.
> Welfare for the homeless, free condoms for the kids—
> We'll not blame the criminal for anything he did.
> For who can say what's right or wrong, if there's such a thing as sin?
> And if it really matters, whether wars we lose or win?

That summed up how a lot of Americans saw the liberalism of the time. It's no wonder they rejected it.

But here's the deep question: Why did the liberals of the 1980s not do a better job of casting aside this seemingly obviously damaging image of themselves? Nobody forced them to endorse the nuclear freeze or to pretend that the mentally ill vagrants in the streets were victims of uncaring economic policies. Democrats could have nominated Sam Nunn for president in 1984 or Joe Biden in 1988; each man had his faults, but he was far closer to the mainstream than the ultimate choice in each year.

Ehrman does a perfectly adequate job of describing the mood of bafflement and defeatism that settled on national Democrats in the 1980s. He has some stinging things to say about the academic Left's trek toward absurdity and irrelevance. But he never sinks his teeth into the "why" question: Why were Democrats so unable to respond to the political changes of the 1970s and find plausible solutions in the 1980s?

It's a question of considerable continuing interest. Even now, even after the Reagan years and the 1994 loss of Congress, even after 9/11 and the unexpected Republican gains in 2002—even after all this, it is striking how void the liberal and Democratic side is of any organizing principle or grand theme that can stir the imagination of the country. There's no lack of brainpower on the liberal and Democratic side and no shortage of ambitious and idealistic people eager to grapple with the issues of our time. And yet somehow all that brainpower and ambition and idealism have failed, year in, year out, to produce a philosophy that is liberal, modern, and capable of producing a governing majority.

It's a fascinating mystery why this should be so. But this mystery, along with many others, will have to wait for some other writer—one who understands that there's more to the art of history than summarizing familiar events. **NR**

Mr. Frum blogs daily at www.NationalReview.com. His most recent book is *An End to Evil: Strategies for Victory in the War on Terror*, with Richard Perle.

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■ CITY DESK ■

Orange Parade

RICHARD BROOKHISER

You would not, I suppose, like to be beaten with a stick. Yet Zen masters sometimes hit their students, to call them from unprofitable meditation. It is a rude way of focusing the attention; of saying, "Look." New York had a little *look* moment with the Gates, a collection of thousands of short orange banners suspended from tall door frames that were briefly arranged throughout Central Park.

The first impression of the Gates was to make this archetypal modern city seem medieval. During the Middle Ages New York was inhabited by elk. But suddenly Central Park became a neighborhood of Siena, competing for the Palio. The Gates were patrolled by men carrying poles topped with green tennis balls—long fuzz-tipped contraptions meant to gently disentangle the banners when the wind wrapped them round their jambs. These functionaries added to the ye olde effect; perhaps they were seneschals or reeves, one of those titles you blip over in Chaucer. Alternatively the Gates seemed oriental. Cavalry flags in a Kurosawa battle scene? Commemoration of the Buddha's liberation from the wheel of existence? Celebration of the Dear Leader's second Five Year Plan? Hard to say. The inscrutability added to the illusion. Seen at a distance, across the Sheep Meadow, the Gates recalled lines on a map: the F train, running from 179th St. in Jamaica to Stillwell Avenue in Coney Island (express in Qns, local in Man and Bklyn); William III, clashing with the Duke of Luxembourg at Steenkirk and Neerwinden; subways and campaigns, punctuated by express stops and hecatombs.

Simile is the refuge of lazy critics. What of the objects themselves? The timing of the Gates was terrific. At the end of winter, dead grass, barren trees, frozen ponds, and sunless sky unite in a palate of gray and brown. When the temperature sits at 30 degrees, the Park is abandoned to joggers and gulls. The Gates brought color and crowds. They slyly implicated other objects. The roof of the Metropolitan Museum happened to be festooned with orange construction-site mesh while the Gates were up: Was that part of the show too? The lake in the lower middle of the Park was guarded by red barrier fences, warning thrill seekers of thin ice; they became next-door neighbors to the Gates on the color spectrum. Some aspects of the Gates were bungled. The frames had to be secured against being toppled, by wind or vandals, but the necessary bases were black, splayed, and ugly. The banners themselves seemed too short, reminding former Parks commissioner Henry Stern of shmattas. Longer banners would have billowed more seductively, but they would have gotten in people's way. The best way to view any one gate was to look straight up as you walked beneath. Then the fabric hung down like a drop curtain, making you an actor.

This being New York, the Gates were most notable for the talk they stimulated. For days the critics raged, with passion and without sense. Some of the most engaged critics were friends of mine (you know who you were). The Gates, it was said, desecrated a great work of art, Olmsted and Vaux's Central Park. Maybe so, but they were hardly alone, and they were also temporary. We're stuck with Balto, Daniel Webster, and several dozen other permanent people and animals. Were the Gates art? Of course not, but is every public spectacle—fireworks, parades, Ice Capades—art? But Christo and Jeanne-Claude, the designers of the Gates, call themselves artists. So we accept everyone's self-definition, do we? Tolstoy called himself a moral reformer, but he was actually an artist. Surely the $21 million the Gates cost could have bought better art—say, a corner of the Met's new Duccio. Beware that argument; at its end, we must spend several trillion dollars commissioning Bach and Shakespeare to write a musical, and buying not one lesser thing besides (or perhaps we spend it all on the world's most wretched tsunami orphan with AIDS, and buy no art whatsoever).

Wiseacres had a field day. One genius built a series of little gates on his kitchen floor; an even greater genius erected a line of orange crackers on the balustrade of one of the Park's ornamental bridges, then fed them to the ducks. These masterpieces became the toasts of the Internet. The Gates painlessly absorbed the ribbing, adding one more snowball to the avalanche of hype. Christo and Jeanne-Claude are surely geniuses at self-promotion, if nothing else. The grumblers held this against them too, as if it were a new thing in the history of culture. When young Walt Whitman finished *Leaves of Grass*, he sent it to Ralph Waldo Emerson, in part, no doubt, because Emerson was the greatest living American writer. Could he also have sent it because Emerson was the most famous living American writer, and thus in the best position to write a good blurb? When New York turns its back on hype, it will be time to move to Philadelphia, or some other necropolis.

I took my longest walk through the Gates on the West Side of the Park, from the New-York Historical Society to Café des Artistes. The day was leaden and damp. Only witch hazel and willows were stirring; the bark of plane trees was white and scabby. A woman wearing high heels and showing a summery expanse of leg was getting her picture taken by a gate. An earnest young man who said he was doing a documentary asked me to share my thoughts with his camcorder. Automobile access to the Park, always whimsical, was more restricted than usual to facilitate the march of the Gates. I had the thoughts I have shared with you, then went indoors for an hour or two.

When I came out, the city was being slammed by snow. Pedestrians stayed home. Cabs cruised slowly and vainly for fares. Gates, trees, and buildings were invisible. All the works of men were hidden. **NR**

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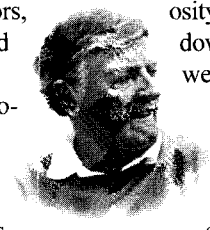
WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Women Slighted?

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 22

It is astonishing how difficult it is to collect dispositive data on such questions as, How are women doing in the sciences? The president of Harvard suggested they were not doing as well as men. Never mind why—is it so? The statisticians began to file in.

Meghan O'Rourke, culture editor for *Slate*, wrote that "women constitute approximately 20 percent of science and engineering departments nationwide and hold few senior positions." Moreover, to get specific about the role of Lawrence Summers, president of Harvard, "under his leadership, tenure appointments of women have declined every year; only four of the last 32 appointments were of women. Harvard does not have a senior female math professor; in a department of 18 chemistry professors, only one senior position is held by a woman."



The controversy bestirred vociferous members of the community of the concerned. One was president of the Association for Women in Mathematics, Dr. Carolyn Gordon of Dartmouth. She wrote that of course things ought to be better, on the other hand, "About a third of all United States citizens who have received Ph.D.'s in mathematics recently are women," and "about half of all undergraduate mathematics degrees in the United States go to women." The pool, therefore, is large and, manifestly, nondiscriminatory. The difficulty would appear to be in the number of women who are promoted to the higher posts in the academic scientific community.

Is this a matter of bias? Ms. O'Rourke thinks so. "Contrary to the pie-in-the-sky assumptions of many of Summers's media defenders, studies show that discrimination against women in the academy is alarmingly widespread, if often unconscious. M. A. Paludi and W. D. Bauer conducted a study in which 180 men and 180 women were asked to grade a paper on a five-point scale. When the author was 'John T. McKay' rather then 'Joan T. McKay' the men on average graded the paper a point higher—and the women scoring the test weren't much more egalitarian."

Ms. O'Rourke then cites a liberating practice involving classical musicians. "Until blind auditions were held for national orchestras, women were radically underrepresented in the field of classical music. Many argued that women had less wind power and were biologically incapable of performance at highest levels on many instruments. Since blind auditions have been held, though, the participation of women has risen precipitously—evidence that it was almost entirely discrimination that was keeping women out."

It is fine to come up with incorruptible devices by which to frustrate discrimination. One beauty of athletics is precisely this incorruptibility: the fastest runner runs faster. This does not preclude curiosity into matters that do indeed touch down on race and ethnicity. How do we account for the victory, year after year, of Ethiopian runners in long-distance races?

In the matter of the sciences, Mr. Summers touched on three explanations for the disparity. 1) Women can't put in the 80-hour work week that would make them competitive. 2) Innate differences between men and women permit men to outperform; and 3) gender discrimination discourages women from going the extra mile.

Why did he not list discrimination as the first cause of underperformance? Nancy Hopkins, a biologist at MIT, walked out before Mr. Summers had finished his speech. Why? Because—she told the *Boston Globe*— she had no alternative. So offensive did she find what was said, she'd have "blacked out or thrown up" if she had stayed. Perhaps Mr. Summers should have listed a fourth reason for female underperformance.

The experience has been cathartic. Do not undertake any analysis of anything that rests—indeed, that touches down on—any possibility of genetic endowment. Just—don't.

Death of a Comic

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 28

If what was before the house was just a formal news bulletin, a famous person who had left Earth for other bournes, then okay, let him go with conventional solemnities. I once attended a funeral at which the rabbi didn't remember the name of the deceased, so that he mourned the passage of Priscilla, remarking the good she had left behind in her lifetime—never mind that the lady in the coffin was called Jane; never mind, the incantations were generic.

But Hunter Thompson would never be confused with anyone else, and when his wife was led through the police cordon to his room, she reported to the press that "he did it [fired the .45-caliber pistol] in his mouth," leaving "his face beautiful. It was not grisly or gruesome by any means. He lived a beautiful life."

He didn't. What he did do was inspire devotional encomiums from people who included blood relatives (my son), and superstar mentors (Tom Wolfe). Wolfe spoke of his stylistic achievements. He wrote "in a style and a voice no one had ever heard before." And Wolfe found in Hunter's life an originality perversely appealing. It was "one long barbaric yawp, to use Whitman's term, of the drug-fueled freedom from and mockery of all conventional proprieties. . . . In the 19th century Mark Twain was king of all the gonzo-writers. In the 20th century it was Hunter Thompson, whom I would nominate as the century's greatest comic writer in the English language."

Writing in the *New York Sun*, John Avlon spoke of Thompson's determination "to puncture the pretenses of the powerful with ruthless humor, a loyalty to deeper truth, and a hatred of hypocrisy. Beneath what could be called amoral behavior there was in fact an inflexible moral code." What deeper truths?

Thompson had a gift for vitriol. Consider a paragraph on Richard Nixon. "For years I've regarded [Nixon's] very existence as a monument to all the rancid genes and broken chromosomes that corrupt the possibilities of the American Dream; he was a foul caricature of himself, a man with no soul, no inner convictions, with the integrity of a hyena

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and the style of a poison toad. I couldn't imagine him laughing at anything except maybe a paraplegic who wanted to vote Democratic but couldn't quite reach the lever on the voting machine."

We were asked to believe (by the *San Francisco Chronicle*) that in reading Thompson we are reading the work of a hero of an entire generation of American students. Concerning that claim a little skepticism is surely in order. After all, an exhibitionist can be spectacular, and even lionized, in the Animal Houses. Thompson elicited the same kind of admiration one would feel for a streaker at Queen Victoria's funeral. Here is a passage from Thompson, in which he seeks amusement by recounting the end of a long day with a visiting British friend, identifying himself as "the journalist":

"The journalist is driving, ignoring his passenger [the visiting Brit], who is now nearly naked after taking off most of his clothing, which he holds out the window, trying to wind-wash the Mace out of it. His eyes are bright red and his face and chest are soaked with the beer he's been using to rinse the awful chemical off his flesh. The front of his woolen trousers is soaked with vomit; his body is racked with fits of coughing and wild choking sobs. The journalist rams the big car through traffic and into a spot in front of the terminal, then he reaches over to open the door on the passenger's side and shoves the Englishman out, snarling: 'Bug off, you worthless faggot! You twisted pig-[expletive deleted], all the way to Bowling Green, you scum-sucking foreign geek.'"

One can be sorry that Hunter Thompson died as he did, but not sorry, surely, that he stopped writing.

Trade: The Bumpy Road

NEW YORK, MARCH 1

WHAT is going on, we learn from TV and the Internet, is a war led every night by Lou Dobbs of CNN against current, and pending, trade practices. Last night Mr. Dobbs looked very grim as he accused American legislators of lying to the American people about the consequences of free trade. Singled out for special obloquy is the pending treaty with five countries in Central America. Mr. Dobbs gave graphic descriptions of farm laborers in that part of the world who earn 90 cents per day. He spoke of the consequences for U.S. labor of outsourcing work, otherwise available to Americans earning 100 times as much.

The indignation of Mr. Dobbs caused some viewers to wonder whether there was, suddenly, a development in the economic picture that altered the common understanding of the case for free trade. Roderick Boyd in the *New York Sun* reports: "One intellectual opponent of Mr. Dobbs's said he focuses on the costs of America's free-market policies without even trying to communicate the benefits. 'His reports are often unbalanced,' said an economist at the Heritage Foundation, Daniel Mitchell. 'They resolutely do not measure the fact that our job growth is driven by the free movement of capital and workers in America.'" Mr. Mitchell added, "There has never been an example in global history where protectionism worked, period."

That statement needs to be qualified. Protectionism can be made to "work" by the simple act of subsidy. Sugar imports into the U.S. are heavily restricted, with the result that harvesters in Louisiana are producing sugar at 3 to 5 times the cost of it in the Dominican Republic.

The protectionist argument was displayed on Mr. Dobbs's show by means of charts. "If free trade means lower prices in the USA, do you approve these lower prices?" About 12 percent of respondents said yes, they liked lower prices. But the next chart asks, "If the lower prices mean unemployment in the United States, do you approve?" No, 72 percent.

If one looks diligently for what represents itself as a fresh point in current protectionist rhetoric, one focuses on the question of motivation. Lorrie Willey of the *Asheville Citizen-Times* analyses Dobbs's argument, made in his book, *Exporting America*. According to Dobbs, "offshoring" isn't necessitated by any lack of skilled domestic workers, nor by the unproductivity of the American worker, nor even by any need for American companies to compete in global markets. "The simple reasoning behind this step is cost reduction, or, as Dobbs would put it, corporate greed."

The screen takes us to India, and the commentator tells us that India bought $5 billion of American-made goods last year, while the U.S. bought three times as many Indian-made goods. Indians have a facility for cyberwork, we learn, so that Indian technicians are widely employed by other nations. It is true of the current economic scene that there is something on the order of fungibility in the use of certain skills. Years ago, American Express hired typists in the Third World to transcribe charge slips, hundreds of millions of them, to avoid paying American typists. The harvest of that outsourcing flows back to American Express offices through the ether. There is no pausing to be done at interdictionist blockades pressing for import fees.

What is new is the immaterialization of many economic products. There isn't any way to send a banana through cyberspace, but that doesn't really affect the basic reason for free trade, which is the doctrine of comparative advantage. Even though there is a universalization of skills, in an age when anybody can type on a keyboard, the acquisition of such skills by a Third World country does not diminish the value of goods being produced, rather it adds to it. The worker in Central America can hope to buy the radio made in Japan, or the computer made in California.

The difference between greed and husbandry has to do with the perspective of the critic. When a century ago we were shown the horseless carriage, we didn't focus on the greed of Henry Ford; we chose, rather, to applaud his ingenuity.

President Bush is standing by free trade policies (however imperfectly we abide by them). It requires acts of faith in economic laws to applaud free trade. But Adam Smith was correct in laying down the law that both parties benefit, giving us the benefit of exposure to Lou Dobbs, and the freedom to reject his counsel.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Who You?

I YIELD to no one in my admiration for this great republic, but I'm a subject of Her Britannic Majesty and there are moments when the whole monarchy deal just falls into place for me. One of them occurred the other day, when the Queen hosted a reception at Buckingham Palace for the "British music industry." This wasn't "British music" as in Sir William Walton and Sir Edward Elgar, but the usual leathery old caterwaulers—though most of them now have knighthoods, too: Sir Elton John, Sir Mick Jagger, Sir Paul McCartney, etc.

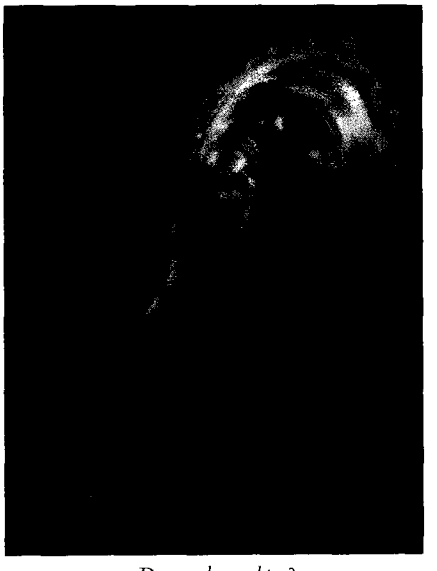
So Her Majesty found herself in a room of legendary rock guitarists, and apparently hadn't a clue who they were. Introduced to Eric Clapton, she politely enquired, "Have you been playing a long time?" Passing on to Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page, the Queen asked, "And are you a guitarist, too?"

Full disclosure: I confess to a certain antipathy to Mr. Clapton. Years ago, I was nominated for a radio award and wound up losing to a BBC production, *The Eric Clapton Story*. Okay, even fuller disclosure: I didn't lose to *The Eric Clapton Story*, I lost to *The Eric Clapton Story Part 4*, which is even more humiliating. If memory serves, Part 4 was the episode with "Layla" in it.

So I envy the Queen her blissful ignorance of the rock colossus. That's what I call real cool. By contrast, consider Vice President Al Gore meeting Courtney Love at a Hollywood fundraiser: "I'm a really big fan," gushed the vice-panderer. Ms. Love, to her credit, scoffed, "Yeah, right. Name a song."

If the Queen is "a big fan" of any popular vocal artiste, she's keeping it under her crown. The poor fellow most often on the receiving end is a guy called Mick Hucknall, lead singer of Simply Red, who were big for 20 minutes in the late Eighties. He gets presented to Her Majesty every couple of years and, regular as clockwork, she immediately responds, "And what do you do?" The first time it happened, at Windsor Castle in 1998, he replied somewhat sourly, "We've been very successful exporting our music all over the world." It's not entirely clear whether he could make the same confident claim today. So, confronted by the familiar biennial blank look of non-recognition on the Queen's face, he tends just to smile politely and let her pass on to the next unrecognizable superstar.

Now I'm a wee bit suspicious of all this. My own impression on encountering the Queen is of how remarkably well informed she is about comparatively obscure corners of her realms—she can rattle off more names of minor Quebec politicians than most Quebeckers can, for example, and when I made that point to an Australian he said it was the same with minor politicians from Papua New Guinea.



Do you know him?
Neither does the Queen (she says).

So when the Queen feigns total ignorance of Eric Clapton, that's exactly what she's doing—feigning, enjoying a massive joke on our over-celebrified culture. In Britain, the geriatric rockers are the new aristocracy. Like the old aristocracy, the aristorockracy live in stately homes and have titles. The only difference is that they're far more hung up on form and precedence than the average duke or marquess. A few years ago, Sting had to issue a public apology to Jools Holland of the band Squeeze, after he'd thrown a huge party at his country pile and committed a ghastly error in placement by seating Jools at a distant table next to some schlub of a session musician.

I can see the point of a so-called "counterculture," but an establishment counterculture is a trickier concept to grapple with. If you're the Queen and your mum was the Empress of India and your cousin was Tsar of all the Russias, you can only marvel, in an undeferential age, at the indestructible deference accorded to arthritic boomer pop culture. For Bill Clinton, one of the perks of being president was getting to meet all his Lite FM favorites. The Queen, in pretending never to have heard of any of these alleged cultural icons, is, in fact, making a profound cultural statement.

In America, of course, there's no Queen, so you have to make do with Chris Rock, who isn't head of state but played one in *Head of State* (the first black president: "The only thing White is the House"). In his Oscar monologue, Rock essayed an amusing riff on one of the passing fancies: "Who is Jude Law? Why's he in every movie I have seen for the last four years?"

Backstage, Sean Penn heard this throwaway gag and fumed and brooded for three hours until he got to walk on and present the award for best actress, and then in his best plonkingly humorless serious-artist mode he reprimanded Chris Rock and explained that Jude Law was, in fact, one of the towering figures of the age. As they say, ignorance of the Law is no excuse. If folks are allowed to get away with that kind of lese majesty, one day they'll be up there being mildly irreverent about Barbra Streisand. Or even Sean Penn.

Personally, I can't wait for the evermore-desperate Academy to sign the Queen to host the Oscars: "Ladies and gentlemen, to present the award for best sound editing please give it up for someone by the name of Sean Penn. Don't tell me you're another one of these actors, Mr. Penn!" **NR**

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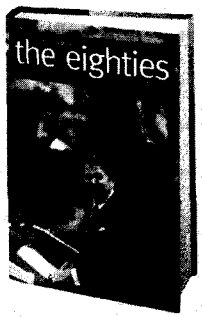

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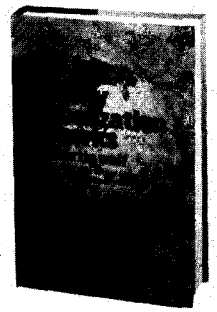

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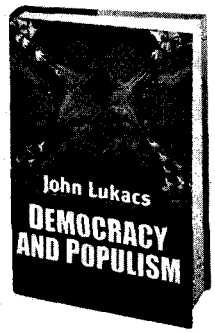

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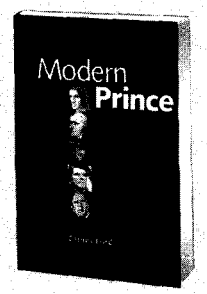

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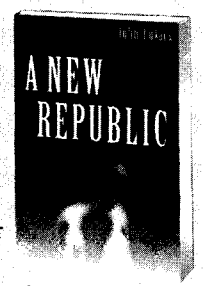

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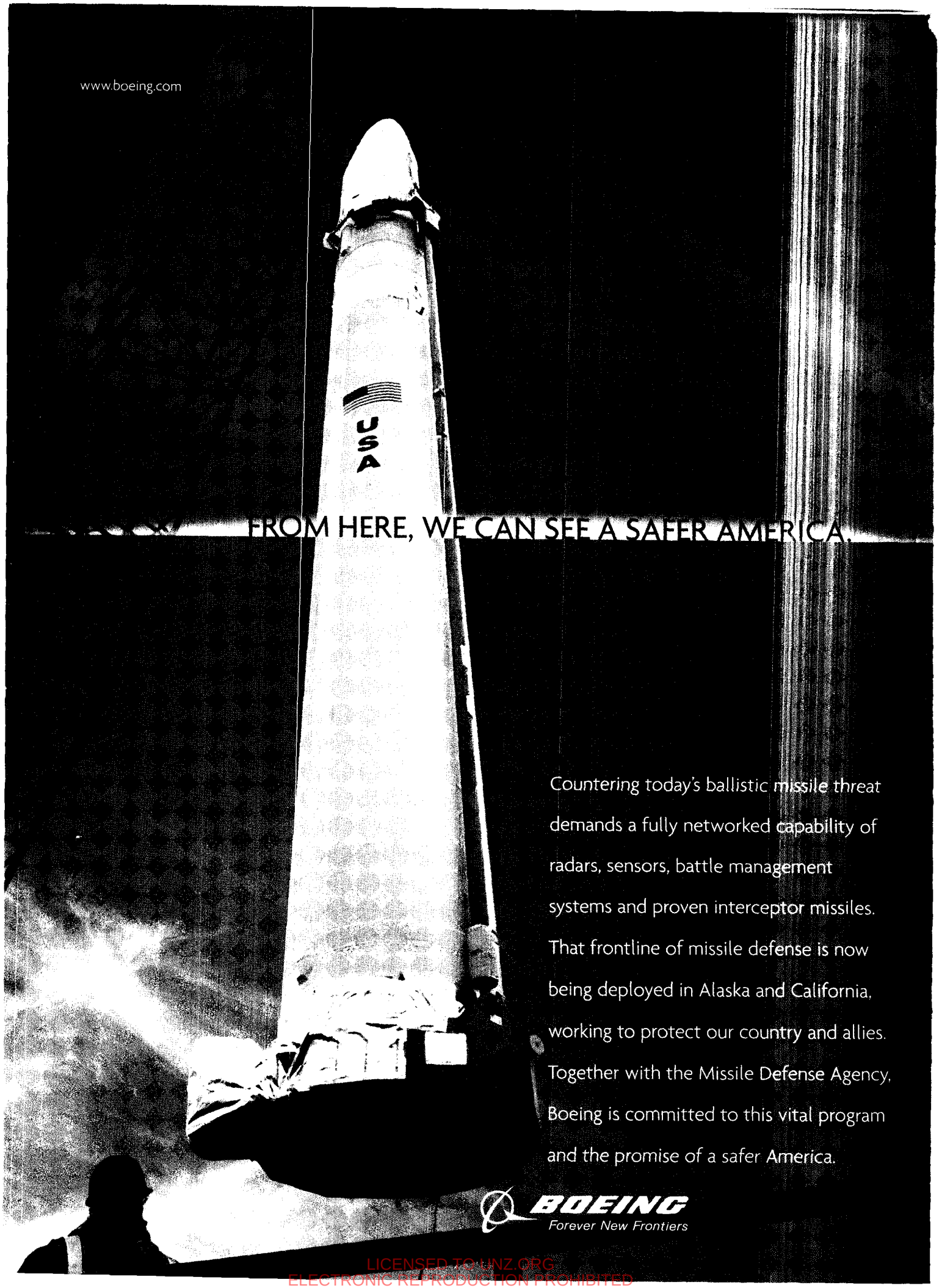
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